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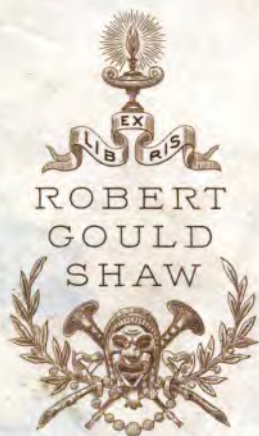
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PHILOSOPHERS

AND

ACTRESSES

BY

ARSENE HOUSSAYE

AUTHOR OF "MEN AND WOMEN OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY," ETC.

PART I.



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P R E F A C E.

PHILOSOPHERS and Actresses—all men are philosophers, all women are actresses : Socrates who studies with Aspasia—Aspasia who rules the world under the name of Pericles ; Abelard who gives lessons to Heloise—Heloise who says to him in a low tone, *Ignoramus !*—Voltaire who teaches the art of acting to mademoiselle de Livry, who soon returns his lessons. Every man who is not coupled with a woman, is not a man. A poet has said : “ God commences the artist, and woman perfects him ; ” and that poet was right. Eve is the true book in which Adam studied. God has given philosophy to man, but he has taught woman the art of acting. At a certain diapason, among all the men and women who have taken a bite of the bitter fruit of knowledge, among the privileged of wit and beauty—artists, thinkers, women of fashion, courtiers—for there is always a court—the greater part are philosophers, the greater part are actresses. It is only at the Sorbonne and at the theatre, that they are seldom met.

Dear reader, this book is the carnival of my soul—and of yours, if you will read it ; and the names of folly and

wisdom, mourning and joy, that pass and repass in disorder in these pages, as in the mazes of a giddy waltz, are the masks and disguises of my fancy. Sometimes even, as it confounds masks and disguises you will see it pass through the narrative or the poem, with one foot in the austere sandal of the philosopher, the other in the embroidered slipper of the actress. But beneath the gloomy drapery and the open bodice, you will perceive that the same heart is beating. These capricious masquerades are transparent metempsychoses animated by a single soul, which seeks for and pursues itself amid the smiling or melancholy phantoms of the past.

The air of this melancholy rondo, which throws Gaus-sin into the arms of Plato, is as whimsical as the song. The lyre alternates with the tambourine, the mournful music with the gay roulade, the laugh with the sob. Yet these two tones at last meet and unite in the cry of regret, of passion or enthusiasm, as the two voices in Mozart's duets, one in mockery, the other in tears, mount together the endless scale of the gamut, and, at the last note, unite, embrace, fly away and vanish in the heaven of the ideal.

What is the use of this book? It is the work of leisure hours—the best hours; let it be to you, dear reader, the book of your leisure hours.

What does this prove? Nothing, except that in these days, when we live so fast, without thought of the passing breeze, the bright sky, or the invisible world that sings of the infinite, we should gild—though it were only by Ruolz's process—the ladder of the passions, that ascends from man to God.

THE HOUSE OF SCARRON.....	PAGE 9
VOLTAIRE	29
VOLTAIRE AND M ^L LE. DE LIVRY.....	109
THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO.....	134
MADENOISELLE GAUSSIN	176
JACQUES CALLOT	192
RAOUL AND GABRIELLE.....	252
THE HUNDRED AND ONE PICTURES OF TARDIF, THE FRIEND OF GILLOT.....	276
MADENOISELLE DE MARIVAUX.....	292
LA TOUR.....	307
THE WHIMS OF THE MARCHIONESS.....	333
A ROMANCE ON THE BANKS OF THE LIGNON.....	365

PHILOSOPHERS AND ACTRESSES.

THE HOUSE OF SCARRON.

THE age of Louis XIV. is, to this day, the most glorious page in the history of France. Voltaire would say so now, as he said it a hundred years ago; for a great age is not made up only of great deeds and heroic conquests; a great age is one that produces at the same time, great captains and great philosophers, great poets and great artists. We will always speak of the age of Pericles, of Augustus, of Leo X., and of Louis XIV. But we shall never speak of the age of Napoleon, for under Napoleon there was but one man worthy of bronze or of granite, worthy of that proud and haughty muse who is called History. That man was Napoleon. I prefer the court of Louis XIV. to the sun of Austerlitz. At the court of Louis XIV. I salute, an all-glorious and entire Olympus: Turenne and Condé, Mazarin and Pascal, Corneille and Molière, Poussin and Lesueur, Mansard and Perrault. I have not

named all the gods; for example Puget, La Fontaine, and Lully. And the demi-gods of that golden age of genius? They are not counted.

Every lover of art always selects some bright period of the past where to retire, within a gallery of portraits that he loves. The dead are not those who have ceased to live. Who can doubt the immortality of the soul, when we ourselves feel within us, as it were, the living spirit of those great men who have rendered the past illustrious? who would dare to say that Molière is dead? I have met him twenty times in the passage of the Theatre-Français. And La Fontaine, who has not seen him amid the dew and the thyme, studying the comedy of human life in the country, or taking the longest route to the academy?

There are even some figures, some of women, who have only transmitted the remembrance of their beauty, and who are the adoration of future ages. Who has not been in love, more or less, with the Fornarina, with Violante, with madame de la Vallière, or with the marchioness de Pompadour? Does she whom you pursue at the ball, or at church only, live in reality any more than these radiant visions?

It is not thus that madame de Maintenon appears to us; many fine intellects have been repelled by her box-wood rosaries. We hardly know how to define her. Is she the heroine of a romance? Is she a Saint Theresa? Is she one of the favorites in the seraglio of Versailles? Is she a queen of France and of

Navarre? She had some partisans; her enemies have never been counted. I acknowledge, that, on beholding her portrait engraved by Mercuri, I am a partisan; but this portrait after Petitot, is it a portrait from life, natural and true? It is a proud and charming beauty, full yet delicate. Since the Psyche of Praxiteles, there has never been so fine a head; Saint Theresa had not so luscious a neck, so sumptuous a bust. But the voluptuousness of the neck and bust is subdued by the expression of pride in the face; the heart is in subjection to the head. Such as she is, every one must love her, were he even Louis XIV., the king who thought himself a god.

You are not acquainted, I imagine, with Agrippa d'Aubigné, the grandfather of madame de Maintenon, whose adventurous life makes up a curious chapter: "In those days, the mind was early trained to labor, as the body to the exercises of war. At the age of six, he could read in four languages; at seven and a half, he translated the *Criton of Plato*; at ten years, his father, an old huguenot soldier, remarked to him, as they were entering Amboise, at the sight of the heads of the conspirators still exposed on the battlements of the city: 'The headsmen, they have decapitated France!' And placing his hand upon the head of his son: 'My son, you must not spare your head, when I am gone, in avenging those glorious leaders; if you spare yourself, you shall have my curse.'" Behold, in what a sturdy school those

men studied who paved the way to the age of Louis XIV. We recur to the *Memoirs of D'Aubigné*, pre-eminently a man of spirit, who spoke his mind in all freedom. On his return from a dangerous mission the king of Navarre gave him his portrait. This was all a king of Navarre was able to give. D'Aubigné wrote beneath this portrait:—

“This prince is of so strange a kind,
What made him so, I can not tell;
That he, a picture, can only find,
Those to reward who served him well.”

He who wrote as follows to Henry IV., was called the man of *rude integrity*: “Sire, your memory will reproach you with the twelve years of my service, and the twelve wounds of my body; it will remind you of your prison, and of the hand which broke your chains, which has remained pure while serving you, and is empty of your favors, free from corruption by your enemy as well as by yourself.” Such were then the servitors of royalty. It was then that men believed in God, and in their souls. At the hour of death, D'Aubigné, being urged to take some nourishment, said to his wife: “My dear, let me depart in peace; I am going to eat the bread of heaven.” As was his life, so was his death.

We breathe in the seventeenth century an indescribable something that invigorates the heart. We might readily believe ourselves to be in a forest of vigorous and venerable oaks, beneath an azure sky.

The national forest is, at the present day, nearly fallen ; there are some few stunted trees scattered at wide intervals among some rustling copsewood, under a stormy sky. In the seventeenth century men were more deeply rooted in their virtues or in their vices — a more generous sap circulated. For example, find me, at the present day, a *rude integrity*, such as that of Agrippa d'Aubigné, or a bold, headstrong vice, like that of his son, Constant d'Aubigné, the father of madame de Maintenon. This Constant d'Aubigné was a rogue, marvellously-well practised in all the seven capital sins ! Molière and Rembrandt alone would have dared to have handled such an exaggerated personage ; read this fragment from the *Memoirs of Agrippa* : “ Since God does not attach his grace to flesh and blood, my son Constant does not resemble his father, although I have brought him up with as much expense as if he had been a prince. This wretch, having at first given himself up to gaming and to drunkenness, ended by ruining himself completely among prostitutes in the low Dutch taverns. He married afterward a miserable woman, whom he finally killed. Wishing to remove him from the court where he continued his debauchery, I obtained for him the command of a regiment ; but nothing could restrain his irregular, libertine, and audacious passions ; he returned to court where he lost at play twenty times more than he was worth.” He staked his honor at play, but he staked a phan

tom. There was but one thing left, his religion; he sold it. Without house or home, law or gospel, he returned to his father to rob him of his two governorships of Maillezais and Doignon. Agrippa, incapable of believing in such perversity, gave him the command of Maillezais, believing that he had to do with a rogue, but with at least a protestant, as he supposed, for his son had abjured his religion secretly in order not to awaken suspicion, and that he might play the traitor more at his ease. Maillezais soon became, under the command of Constant d'Aubigné, "a public gaming place, thronged with prostitutes, and a shop of counterfeiters and passers of false coin." He sold his God, he sold his father, he sold in turn all that he could find to sell. Agrippa disinherited and gave him his curse. What did it matter! there still remained something to sell—France. He formed a secret alliance with the English government; but this new treason caused him to be thrown into prison. Hence, Françoise d'Aubigné, the marchioness of Maintenon, was born in the prison of Niort, 1635. Constant d'Aubigné always succeeded in reaching a plank of safety in his shipwrecks. Thus, for example: mademoiselle de Cardillac, the daughter of Pierre de Cardillac, and of Louise de Montalembert, was captivated with him, and married him for his chivalric exterior. If he was guilty of every crime, he was still brave and gallant. He wasted the fortune of his second wife,

loved her passionately, abused her as if she had been a courtesan, but did not kill her, as he did his first. Mademoiselle de Cardillac survived, but under what circumstances? in prison or in exile; and thus, as monsieur de Noailles remarks, "she possessed that seriousness that misfortune bestows. Her example was the best lesson in virtue." Madame de Villette, sister to Constant d'Aubigné, more touched at his misery than revolted with his crimes, went to the prison of Niort for his three children, whom she took with her to her chateau of Marçay. The little Françoise had the same nurse as her own daughter. Poor Madame d'Aubigné believed herself cursed of God and man, since even in the prison where she prayed and mended her husband's stockings, Constant d'Aubigné was coining counterfeit money. She wrote to madame de Villette with a deep feeling of wretchedness and abasement: "I fear much that my miserable little one gives you a great deal of trouble; may God give her grace to prove her gratitude." Strange contrast between the cradle and the tomb; she, who was born in prison and lived on charity, was to die the wife of Louis XIV. If that had been told to the mother—the poor mother who had not even a drop of milk for her offspring!

Françoise d'Aubigné never forgot the truly maternal care of her aunt; she said at a later day, when they wished to make her abjure Calvinism, "I will believe all you wish, provided I am not

obliged to believe that my aunt Villette will be damned."

Another word about her father. He was released and went with the mother and her children to Martinique. This man, who had so many times sported with fortune, regained it once more; but he had, hardly become rich again, when he gambled and lost all. He only left his wife the bed on which he died. It was necessary for her to return to France, and by the grace of God, she did so. The ship of the family was at least lightened by being relieved of this wretch, Constant d'Aubigné, whom the severe lessons of adversity could not convert to the good.

Romance had already interleaved its improbable pages with the life of Françoise d'Aubigné. At Martinique she, like Alexander, came near being devoured by a serpent; during the voyage she was on the point of being thrown into the sea on the supposition that she was dead; when her mother gave her the farewell kiss, she stretched out her arms and opened her eyes. This is not all: the vessel in which she sailed was attacked by pirates. I say nothing about the fortune-tellers who foretold her royalty. Who has not his royalty here below, though it may be only for a single hour? The sybils are always right.

On her return to France, Mademoiselle Françoise d'Aubigné, was again received by madame de Villette, who had remained in the protestant faith, as

much from respect for her father as for Calvin. Françoise followed the religion of her aunt.

At this epoch, when the republic of heaven was the only political topic, people busied themselves a great deal about conversion. Madame de Neuillant, a relative of madame d'Aubigné, received an order from the court to withdraw Françoise from the motherly care of madame de Vallette. Françoise wept profusely; the chateau of Marçay was, in a manner, her native land. She finally departed after madame de Neuillant; but, in leaving, she did not leave her faith behind. She attached herself to it obstinately. Caresses were at first employed, then humiliations. She was confounded with the servants. She became a Cinderella, a margot. She was condemned to take care of the chickens. Has she not said, somewhere: "I ruled in the poultry-yard; it was there that my reign commenced." She who was elevated even to a throne, might be seen, in those days, every morning, "with a shade over her face to save her complexion, a straw hat upon her head, a switch in her hand, and a little basket on her arm. She used to be sent to guard the turkeys, with the order not to touch the basket until she had learned by heart five verses of Pibrac." What then was there in the basket? Some black bread and cherries. She only ate the cherries, and thought herself quits in learning one verse.

Madame de Neuillant was too fierce a catholic to

stop there. She placed Françoise by force in a convent of the Ursalines at Niort, whence mademoiselle d'Aubigné was soon discharged, madame de Neuillant refusing to pay the board of a huguenot. She returned to her mother, who had not yet dried her eyes. "When I returned to my mother, who was a very good catholic, she took me to mass and tried to force me to kneel before the altar; but I immediately turned my back upon it; as often as she placed me there, I did the same, fully persuaded that it was idolatry to worship Jesus Christ in the host." Madame d'Aubigné took her rebellious child to the Ursalines in Paris, where "most of the nuns got up a scene at the sight of me: one ran away frightened, one made faces at me, and another promised me an *Agnus*." At the Ursalines in Paris, they had the good sense not to treat mademoiselle with any constraint; as soon as she was at liberty, she beheld the light and abjured. Mademoiselle d'Aubigné left the convent to enter the world through the gate opened by Scarron.

Scarron who was one of the people, who suffered and laughed, a witty, but burlesque cripple—who married Françoise d'Aubigné, who married Louis XIV.—has humorously protested against the visible greatness of the world, by its invisible greatness—against birth by intellect—against the pretentious and affected hotel, by the humble abode enlightened with the freedom of thought. Voiture at the hotel Ram-

bouillet enveloped himself in the swaddling-clothes of tradition; Scarron at his humble fireside, seated between Marion de Lorme and Ninon, laughed somewhat at the folks of the court who came "to listen." "I, also, have a marquisate," he used to say to the great lords, "the marquisate of Quinet." (Quinet was the name of his bookseller.)

The literary people who were grouped about Scarron, were Ménage, Pelisson, Scudery, Benserade, Sarrazin — *his neighbor* — Marigny, Legrais, Saint-Amand. Many of these poets were neither sufficiently famous, nor sufficiently well dressed to present themselves at the hotel Rambouillet. Such were about all the *canaille* that visited the house of the cripple; but, at the same time, there were to be seen at his fireside, or at his table, maréchal d'Albret, the duke de Vivonne, the marquis de Sévigné, the count de Grammont, Coligny, Mortemart, Beautrun, La Sablière, and twenty other men of the best company. The women, of course, did not attempt to dispute the place with Ninon or Marion. The exquisitely refined who wished to travel on the *Carte du Tendre*, went to the hotel Rambouillet.

In this house of the cripple, where folks laughed and supped heartily, one evening a young girl of fifteen made her appearance. "She was already beautiful, but timid, and she began to weep as she entered, being embarrassed in consequence of the shortness of her dress." She had just arrived from the provinces

where she had not followed the fashions of the court. Her mother accompanied her. The young girl only spoke with her beautiful eyes; every one felt that eloquence of the heart. Scarron was affected to tears. Madame and mademoiselle d'Aubigné had been announced; Scarron, as usual, was very witty. The young girl was more struck with that original mind, which dared to rise above prejudice, than with all the fine airs of the gentlemen who showed off that evening for her especial benefit. It might be seen, from the beginning that, with her, the head triumphed over the heart.

Madame d'Aubigné returned to Poitou with her daughter. She died there soon after. Françoise d'Aubigné found herself all alone, her aunt Villette being also dead. She was obliged to go to live again with her aunt de Neuillant; "madame de Neuillant, who, although her relative, left her through avarice quite destitute," says Tallemant des Réaux. Decidedly the preface to the life of Françoise d'Aubigné was not inviting.

She had left at Paris, besides Scarron, a sympathizing soul in mademoiselle de Saint Hermant. She wrote to her from Niort: "I am neither satisfied with my language nor with my thoughts; without your pen, I can not say the half of what I have to say; I promise you the other half when I shall have as much wit as Monsieur Scarron." Françoise d'Aubigné had mistaken the door on her arrival at Paris;

it was the hotel Rambouillet that she should have entered.

Scarron saw this letter, he answered it: "Mademoiselle, I was far from suspecting that the young girl that I beheld in my house six months ago, with a dress that was too short, and who wept, I hardly know why, was as clever as she had the appearance of being; and I can not imagine the reason you should have taken as much care to conceal your wit, as the rest took to show theirs." This was the first letter of a gallant character that Françoise d'Aubigné received. It is clear that she commenced with Scarron as she ended with Louis XIV.

She fell in with some others by the way; for example, at the very beginning, the chevalier de Meré, who pretended to bestow cleverness upon women. Madame de Lesdiguières, it is well known, remarked to him, "I wish to be witty."—"Well! madame, you shall be," he answered. But he gave neither wit nor love. Françoise d'Aubigné allowed him to believe that she listened to his lessons, and that she studied "his wretched style," as madame de Sévigné called it; but her real master was Plutarch.

She returned to Paris with madame de Neuillant, who, both proud and jealous of her beauty, introduced her a little into society. She became almost celebrated; her romantic life was talked about; she was called the young Indian; it was a subject of spec-

nation as to what sad or glorious future this young orphan would reach, she who was so beautiful to look upon, and so beautiful to listen to, for she spoke like a delightful book. She feared a convent as she did the tomb; she loved God, but in the bright aspect of life; besides, she did not wish to remain an old maid. She knew, however, that a woman without a dower could only marry a man of intellect, retired from the world, or a soldier born to rove about the world. She had already roved enough. When Scarron, who loved her like a daughter, like a sister, like an ideal mistress, offered her his roof as a last resort, she was not offended, and said to herself, doubtless, that the marriage that should unite her and Scarron, would be one of mind. The marriage took place in the spring of 1652. "When the contract was being drawn up, Scarron declared that he acknowledged, as the property of the bride, an income of four louis, two large, rebellious eyes, a very beautiful bust, a beautiful pair of hands, and a great deal of intellect." The notary asked him, what settlement he made upon her. "Immortality," he replied; "the names of the wives of kings die with them, but that of the *wife of Scarron* will live for ever."

Mademoiselle de Pons lent the bride her dress for the wedding. She was grave and dignified, and in one day changed the whole character of the house of her husband. "I will not abuse her much, but I

will teach her a great deal," Scarron had said, but he was mistaken. To that house, frequented by a society somewhat perverted, she brought virtue—but the virtue of seventeen, and that smiled gracefully. She shared in all the conversations and all the suppers of the house; but, as the historian relates, "she imposed respect without hindering pleasure;" and, according to madame de Caylus, "she passed her Lent in eating a herring at the end of the table, because she knew that a course of conduct less exact and austere, at her age, would lead to youthful license beyond control."

On the day after her wedding she commenced the career of a *femme savante*, but it was with a grace and reserve worthy of all praise. She was, at the same time, the scholar, the critic, and the secretary, of Scarron; but she was, at the same time, his most devoted wife. When he suffered, she was by his side as when he gave utterance to the outpourings of his intellect. She studied Spanish, Italian, and even Latin; but she also studied life. By degrees the rule of Scarron in his house was eclipsed by the brilliancy of hers. They no longer went to see him, but her. "She had," says monsieur de Noailles, "acquired an inexhaustible charm in conversation; every one knows the story of the servant, who, one day at the table, whispered in her ear, 'Madame, another story still, for there is no roast to-day.'"

Scarron was no richer for his marriage. It often

happened that there was no roast. He did not the less desire to live like a lord. He assumed, even like Scudery, the air of a patron of the arts. A letter of Poussin informs us, that during the tempest of the Fronde, this great artist painted two pictures ordered by Scarron—a *Fête de Bacchus*, and a *Fête de l'Amour*. Mignard was a friend of the family. Scarron ordered some pictures of him also. He painted the first and the last portrait of madame de Maintenon, in 1659 and 1694. It is, unfortunately, only the last of these two portraits that we are acquainted with. "We only know her as an old woman," says monsieur de Noailles; "we always picture her to ourselves, in her robe of *feuille morte* and sombre head-dress, looking severe and religious; ruling the court that had become serious like herself." Mignard painted her as a Saint Françoise, noble and dignified, but sombre and sorrowful, without a ray of her youth to lighten up the melancholy face. It is like the Voltaire of the painters and the sculptors, who is a *queer old man, burthened with eighty winters*. Those whose brows have been touched by glory appear only crowned with laurel and cypress. The ideal characters only, or those that death has harvested in their bloom, appear before us crowned with roses and violets.

There is still another portrait of Madame Scarron by Madame Scudery, which appears as one of the characters in *Clélie*, under the name of Lyriane;

"Nothing can be compared to her without injustice. She was tall and of a beautiful figure, but her size was not of the kind that repels. She did not affect the beautiful, but was infinitely so. Her mind was formed expressly for her beauty."

Madame Scarron always lived at home; in the beginning, as Scarron wrote to monsieur de Villette, "she is very unhappy at not having sufficient means, and an equipage in order to go wherever she might wish." Afterward Scarron himself kept her by the side of his bed. She was confirmed more and more in her virtue, well understanding that had been her sole happiness, as it would be her only refuge. Did Villarceaux love her without giving her any anxiety about her principles? It has been attempted to throw a doubt about that virtue almost peculiar in her circle; but she has in her favor that wicked tongue of Tallemant, who says, "Madame Scarron is well received everywhere, but so far, it is believed, that she has escaped the gulf."

I am inclined to think that, between Scarron and Louis XIV., there was some connecting link, Villarceaux, for instance. Ninon, questioned about this savage virtue, replied: "I know nothing; I have seen nothing; but I often lent my yellow chamber to her and to Villarceaux." Well, Villarceaux was a dangerous person to have so close by, he who succeeded in keeping Ninon in the country for three entire years—for three entire years!

VOL. I.—2

Aggravating circumstance! Madame Scarron was a great deal with Ninon. I am well aware it was more the society of the mind than the person that she frequented—as with her husband; but the mind has also its days of culpable curiosity; the mind likes to test the heart, and it likes to test it by experience. Madame Scarron, seeing Ninon, sought and cherished in the *beau monde*, after an experience of more than twenty years of amorous folly, had before her eyes a fatal example, all the more fatal, since Ninon, a charming book, always wide open, had not dedicated a single page to repentance.

However, that may be; let us continue. Let us admit, since she has said so at a later period to her brother, that she has never been *married*. Let us believe her when she writes: “My heart is free, wishes always to be so, and always will be.”

I should prefer that Saint François d’Aubigné had been belated some summer’s evening, were it only for a half hour, in the forest of the blooming mysterious passions, like Saint Augustine and Saint Theresa; she who has never been *married*, is not a *savante*, is not a woman. Saint Theresa said of the devil, “That miserable one, he does not know love.” I am quite ready to pity madame de Maintenon, if she never loved.

Scarron died a stoic, after some noisy success. He was buried under the epitaph he wrote himself, and there was no further question about

him.* "Upon his tomb," says eloquently the duke de Noailles, "there reigned a long silence. No one ventured to recall his name in the presence of that destiny which elevated madame de Maintenon so high." The solemn hour of the reign of Louis XIV. had tolled, all the greatness of France had already ascended the throne. Louis XIV., who believed that all the passions of France beat in his heart, was soon to say: "*I am the state*," for he saw everywhere about him courage and genius. It was during his palmy days that he conducted, at full speed, mademoiselle de Montpensier to the Luxembourg, passing the guard and remarking to mademoiselle: "How happy I should be if the robbers should attack us."

The widow of Scarron did not belong to those palmy days. When she reached Louis XIV., the horses of the king no longer took their bits in their teeth. Let us not follow her further. To some she appears to mount, mount, mount always; to us, to descend from the height of her beauty and her intellect. Moreover, all the world knows the history of madame de Maintenon, old and a devotee, for it is the history of France. In her youth she had lightened with a smile the grief of Scarron; when old, she covered the royal dignity with a severe mask.

* Here is this touching epitaph worthy of the antique:—

"Passer-by! let your step be light,
Or else, ye may disturb my rest,
For this is the only night
That sleep, poor Scarron e'er has blest."

Louis XIV. thought to perpetuate his youth like all those who have been young in earnest. In him there were always two beings: the demigod descended from Olympus, and the gentleman eager for adventure.

In these later times, Louis XIV. has been too severely judged as a dancer of ballets. Alexander, during a festival, had touched the lute with the grace of Orpheus; "Are you not ashamed to play so well?" said Philip to him. This excellent remark of Philip does not blot out a single ray of the glory of Alexander. In the same way the historian may get as angry as he pleases about the dancing of Louis XIV., he can never blot out a single one of his conquests. Besides we are not altogether of the opinion of Antisthenes, who remarked, after having listened to a fine player on the flute: "Ismenius is a young man of no worth, except that he may be an excellent flute-player." Let us be less Spartan-like, as we remember those gods of Olympus who did not disdain the joyous festivals of the intellect.

VOLTAIRE.

I.

To write the history of the life and works of Voltaire, is almost the same thing as writing the history of the 18th century, in truth, for Voltaire appeared far back in the regency, and only disappeared at the first rumors of the revolution, and do we not see his influence even in the reign of Bonaparte? And, during the seventy years which he held the pen, do we not see him in every horizon? You meet him at every step in the history of this strange century, at the theatre, at the academy, in exile, lodged with the king of Prussia; at Versailles, where he is merely a courtier of madame de Pompadour; at Ferney, where he is the king of the intellectual world. Where he is not, his spirit is ever present. Ask of Fréron, of Desfontaines, of all his victims, of all his critics. Ask of the Encyclopædia which forged on its anvil the thoughts of Voltaire, ask of the journals of the time, do they not give more news about Ferney than about the court of France? If any one here below

ever made himself a kingdom by his intellect, it was Voltaire.

This man, who filled his age with his ideas, his temerity; this poet, who had too much wit; this violent philosopher, who sowed good and evil by the handful, has been judged in turn by enemies and by enthusiasts. Even at the present day, a thousand confusing voices still sing his praises or proclaim his errors. To the one, he is a worthy brother of La Fontaine and Racine; to the other, the gloomy precursor of Marat and Babœuf. Both deceive themselves; Voltaire did not succeed La Fontaine and Racine, did not suckle Marat and Babœuf; he represented by dint of reason and raillery the spirit of his age. It would be vain to seek in his works for the effeminate grace of Racine, and the Gallic naiveté of La Fontaine; as vainly would one seek there for the germ of the ideas represented after his death by that fool who called himself Babœuf, or that greater fool who called himself Marat. It is well to follow the track of a wit, but to go beyond the visible trace is to go at hazard, to wander away, to lose one's self.

In every age some man has appeared who rises above all others, and who speaks more loudly than those who are speaking; who spreads the light of intellect over the chaos of the ideas of his times; collecting the various sounds made about him, he subdues them by his voice, he reproduces them by his

eloquence, he is the most listened to. In the 18th century, this man was Voltaire, for the ideas of Voltaire were in germ in the minds of all thinkers. Look at Bayle, at Fenélon himself. Genius, most commonly, is merely a well-arranged echo.

Before we speak of the character and the works of the man, let us look at the hazards and destinies of his life. Let us follow Voltaire step by step in the various paths which he took from taste or by force; let us see whether he was merely a plaything of destiny, or whether he walked unfettered. But who shall ever unveil this mystery of human life, who shall dare to say with assurance, I go whither I will?

FRANÇOIS MARIE AROUET DE VOLTAIRE was born February 20th, 1694, at Châtenay, near Paris. His father, François Arouet, had been a notary at the Châtelet; his mother, Marguerite d'Aumart, was descended from a noble family of Poitou. He came into the world feeble, like Fontenelle, who lived a hundred years. He was privately christened, it was not till November that he could be baptized; he had for godfather an abbé, without abbey and without faith, the abbé de Châteauneuf, a friend of his mother and a lover of Ninon de l'Enclos; thus it has been said that wit and irreligion took possession of him from the cradle. The abbé, regarding his title of godfather seriously, wished to direct the youthful intelligence of his godson; he taught him to read;

Ninon asked him one day about the child. "My dear," he answered, "my godson had a double baptism, but there is not any apparent effect therefrom, he is scarcely three years old and he knows all the *Moisade* by heart." Thus Voltaire, thanks to the man who had answered for his faith before the church, learned to read in this impious poem attributed to J. B. Rousseau. Ninon wished that the child of such promise should be presented to her. She kissed his blonde locks with her faded and profaned lips; she predicted to him that he would have the intellect of an angel. This was not the only prediction which the infant inspired. A few years afterward, at the college of Jesuits, Father Jay, struck with the boldness of his ideas, told him that he would be the standard (others have said the Coryphæus) of deism in France. Ninon did not lose sight of this infant, who was destined to hold the intellectual sceptre for as long a period as she had held the sceptre of gallantry. At her death, she left him two hundred pistoles for the purchase of books.

While with the Jesuits, Voltaire had not time to become a poet, wit had come too soon to shed its brilliant rays; poetry, which demands somewhat of shade and silence for its development, was not yet to expand for him. But was Voltaire ever a poet? Did he ever cultivate that flower of revery which the heart waters with a tear? Did he ever raise himself high enough to steal from celestial shores that

rose of love whose perfume the poets scatter here below?

The court had become superannuated and superstitious, like the king. Madame de Maintenon wished to enchain France with her boxwood rosaries; all the courtiers, all the dignitaries, all the titled slaves, covered their faces with devotional masks. The eighteenth century rose from this; princes, nobility, priests, and poets, protested, by elegant orgies, against the pretentious austerity of the court. As they were delicate debauchees, gayly irreligious, graceful blasphemers, witty disorganizers; as they had at their head men like the prince de Conti, the duc de Vendôme, the grand prior, the duc de Sully, the marquis de la Fare, the abbé de Chaulieu, it was a mark of *ton* to be admitted into their circle. The abbé de Chateauneuf, who wanted to do his duty by his godson, did not fail to bring him there on his leaving college. Voltaire was sixteen; up to that time, perhaps, he was only half way irreligious, for in spite of the lessons of his godfather, he had found among the Jesuits a good odor of Christian candor; but once in this school of licentious gayety and unbridled voluptuousness, how could he live with that virginity of heart which preserves youth to the age of reason?

Arouet was not admitted into this brilliant company as a poet. He took the bearing of a nobleman. What was wanting to him for the part? He

had wit, person, money—he wanted only a name; he took the name of Voltaire. He ventured to be familiar with everybody, already reckoning on wit, which saves everything. Thus, on his débüt in the circle of the voluptuaries, he said to the prince of Conti, who had read verses to him: “Monseigneur, you will be a great poet, I must get the king to give you a pension.” In the midst of mundane dissipations he did not lose sight of the poetical horizon. He sketched the tragedy of *Œdipus*, and wrote an ode for the competition before the French Academy. In the eighteenth century, the tragedy and the poem for the prize were, so to speak, the antechamber of poetry; it is necessary to pass through it. Voltaire, you guess, did not obtain the prize of the academy; he was not a poet trimmed to be a laureat, he had too much boldness of mind. It must be said that the subject of the competition, was the decoration of the choir of *Nôtre Dame*. A religious subject, and before the academy! that would be something to surprise everybody nowadays.

Meanwhile his father thought that he was ruined on hearing that he made verses and went into good society. The poor man was at the same time tormented by the obstinate Jansenism of his eldest son; he often said, “I have two fools for sons, one in verse and one in prose.” He exiled the fool in verse to the Hague, to the French embassy. The ambassador, the marquis of Chateaufneuf, was not so easy to

get along with as his younger brother, the abbé de Chateauneuf. He strove to lead Voltaire back to prose, but the young poet would not be subdued; he not only made verses, but, which was aggravating, he made amorous verses. "I no longer hope for anything from your son," wrote the ambassador to the old notary, "for you see he is doubly a fool, a poet, and in love." Voltaire was desperately smitten with Pimpette du Noyer, the second daughter of the too celebrated adventuress who lived at the Hague upon libels and intrigues, who had taken refuge there as a protestant, but more for freedom of conduct than freedom of conscience. The ambassador forbade love to Voltaire, the poet persisted; the marquis de Chateauneuf ordered him to return to France. Voltaire left, endeavoring to carry off Pimpette du Noyer; but madame du Noyer, who reckoned on her daughter's black eyes to carry her on in the world, wrote a libel against Voltaire, and held Pimpette under surveillance.

Fame seldom permits the painters to give us the portraits of the poets before time's ravages have passed over their faces. The painter represents Homer to us old, blind, and a beggar. Can we find in the gallery of the poets, from Homer to Milton, a single head in the freshness of youth, and the graces of love? All the poets appear to us crowned with laurel and cypress. Should we not be charmed to

see them crowned with roses and myrtles? White hairs are venerable, but youthful locks are dearer to the heart; age is noble and grave, but youth is so beautiful in its follies! As a moralist has said, "we do not know a man of former times well, but when we possess at least two portraits of him." In thinking of Voltaire, the first image which is excited in our memory is that of a poet of eighty years, buried in a wig, armed with a diabolical smile, and a still piercing look. It is because the Voltaire of the painters and sculptors was the *cacochymic old man, laden with the weight of eighty winters*. For all that, Voltaire, at twenty years, has many charms which he has no longer at eighty; he is not covered with glory, but he is much more glorious, he is young! Besides, what was wanting in him to win fame? he has a wit to be dreaded; he is a lover, he is a poet, he has not yet written *La Henriade*! For my part, my pleasure was truly lively when, for the first time, I discovered a portrait of Voltaire at the age of twenty. What grace! what fire! what spirit! That forehead contains a world, but that mouth before it speaks has still so many kisses for the Pimpettes. The chestnut curls of the careless lover of mademoiselle de Livry are pleasanter to behold than that head which will soon be despoiled by genius. Do not complain that I endeavor in my turn to paint Voltaire in his giddy and charming youth. Those who are most familiar with their Voltaire, do

not know him young. For all of our generation, Voltaire is only the patriarch of Ferney, sowing with full hands scandal and irreligion. Thus to paint Voltaire, is it not to paint a man in an hour of suffering, of anger, or of error?

II.

CELEBRITY greeted Voltaire in his early years. His life may be written by looking through the memoirs and compilations of the times. As early as 1718, Voltaire, who still called himself Arouet, occupies thirty pages in the "Lettres Galantes" of madame du Noyer. First there is a Parisian letter, several lines of which I will reproduce: "What astonishes me is that you have not discovered among the persons in the suite of M. the marquis de Châteauneuf, a young man who has made a great noise by his poems; they are actually much sought after, particularly by those who like satire, which is the forte of this new poet, whom I have been expecting to hear you speak of, not thinking that a man of wit and a Frenchman could escape your knowledge. He is called Arouet, he is the son of a treasurer of the chambre des comptes."

To this letter madame du Noyer answers: "Your M. Arouet has not escaped me, though he has made a very short sojourn in this country. The character of poets accords very well with that of lover in which

M. Arouet has shone in Holland, and which has caused his departure. He saw fit to talk thereon to a young lady of good condition, who had a mother difficult to deceive, and whom such an intrigue in no wise pleased; and it was on the complaint of this mother that it was judged best to send back our lover to the place whence he came, and that measures were designedly taken to deprive him of the means of continuing to see his fair one, measures which he knew how to render vain, as you may see by fourteen of his letters, which I send you; for since they are so curious about his verse at Paris, they will not be less so about his prose. You must let me know what you think of them."

The fourteen letters of Voltaire follow. They are an entire romance—a romance, at least, as it was understood a century ago. Rendezvous, disguises, surprise, separation, tears, oaths, nothing is wanting, not even the premeditated *coup de théâtre*. In the letters, Voltaire is just at that enthusiastic age when one would be willing to buy, at the cost of all the troubles of Anadis, the pleasure of lamenting over them with the same eloquence. In the first letter, the page of the marquis de Chateauneuf is a prisoner of love. Without doubt madame du Noyer, to enhance the éclat of her virtue, had been to the ambassador to complain of the bold attempts of Arouet to seduce her daughter. As madame du Noyer is a mischievous woman, and, still worse,

a woman who writes, the ambassador, fearing her anger, hastens to do her justice. He places his page in arrest, resolving that he shall return to France in a few days. Until then, the poet was perhaps only half in love : a dream, a fantasy, a caprice, one of those will-o'-the-wisps of love which precede the rising sun ; but, scarce imprisoned, behold Aronet desperately in love with pretty Pimpette du Noyer. It was hardly love, it was already passion, his heart bounded and his tears flowed. He demands with loud cries, to distract the ennui of his solitude, the portrait of his mistress. What do I say ? the portrait ! he demands his mistress herself. But as he is closely watched, he knows not to whom to confide his message. In the second letter, he passionately exclaims, " I am here a prisoner in the name of the king, but though they have the power to take away my life, they can not take from me the love that I have for you. Yes, my adorable mistress, I will see you this evening, though my head falls for it on the scaffold. Be on your guard against madame, your mother, as the most cruel enemy you can have ; what do I say ? be on your guard against everybody. Hold yourself in readiness : as soon as the moon rises I will leave the hotel *incognito*, I will take a carriage, we will fly like the wind to Schevelin ; I will bring ink and paper, we will write our letters ; but, if you love me, console yourself ; recall all your presence of mind, constrain yourself before madame, your mother, en-

deavor to bring your portrait, and the dread of the greatest torments will not prevent my being at your service. Be ready at four o'clock, I will wait for you close by your street. Adieu, there is nothing to which I will not expose myself for you. My dear heart, adieu."

In the following letters Voltaire, who, up to this time has shown himself timid, becomes emboldened like a gallant of good lineage who has heard the duc de Richelieu speak of his high deeds. It is not enough to have seen Pimpette by moonlight, he must see her at midnight. "You can not come here; it is impossible for me to go to your house in open day; I will escape by a window at midnight; if you have any place where I can see you, if you at that hour can quit your mother's bed. Let me know if you can come to your door to-night; I have things of great consequence to tell you. Adieu, my amiable mistress." Still it is not enough to have seen, or rather to have pressed to his heart the blushing brow of Pimpette; Arouet imagines that it would be still pleasanter to introduce his mistress into the hotel where he is a prisoner. You see that the romance becomes complicated, here is the chapter of the disguises: "If you would change our misfortunes to pleasures, it only depends upon yourself. Send Lisbette at three o'clock; I will give her a parcel for you, containing a man's dress; you will put it on at her house, and if you are kind enough to have the goodness to

visit a poor prisoner who adores you, you will take the trouble to come to the hotel at dusk. To what cruel extremity are we reduced, my dear? Is it for you to come and seek me? But, nevertheless, it is the only means for us to see one another. You love me, so I hope to see you in my little apartment. The happiness of being your slave will make me forget that I am the king's prisoner. As my dress is known, and you might consequently be recognised, I send you a cloak which will conceal your doublet and your face. My dear heart, remember that our circumstances are truly critical."

Pimpette, at least as romantic, if not as much in love as her lover, runs the risk of this curious disguise, whereupon the next day this letter of Voltaire's: "I know not whether I ought to call you monsieur or mademoiselle. If you are adorable in a cap, i'faith you are a handsome cavalier, and our porter, who is not in love with you, thought you a very pretty boy. The first time that you will come he will give you a marvellous reception. But for all that, you have an appearance as terrible as amiable, and I fear lest you should have drawn your sword in the street so that nothing should be wanting to your character of young man. After all, young man as you are, you are as cautious as a girl:—

"At last I have seen thee, dear object of my love,
'This very day disguised as cavalier;

I thought that Venus from above
In Cupid's garb had stolen here.
Although the god in age resembles thee,
And though his mother is less fair,
This truth was still revealed to me,
In spite of all that could thy charms impair,
Pimpette, for a divinity,
Your virtue is too great, I fear.

"There is never a god who should not take you for a model. They think to surprise us to-night, but he whom love guards is well guarded; I will leap out by the window, it is the lover's road, and I will come at dusk to your mother's door."

This interview was discovered; instead of two guards, Voltaire had four. On her part, madame du Noyer placed Pimpette under lock and key; but, in spite of all the jailers in the world, will not lovers who set about it with good will succeed in seeing one another? Aronnet and Pimpette would have deceived the universe. They met again, but it was for the last time. At the Hague, nocturnal rendezvous are not as pleasant as at Venice or Seville. Pimpette took cold and willy-nilly had to lie abed. Voltaire had but two days more to remain in Holland; he wrote letter upon letter, but was obliged to leave without bidding adieu to his divine Pimpette. Monday, December 16, 1713, he wrote, before getting into his carriage, "Adieu, mine adorable, if one could write kisses, I would send you an infinitude by the postman; in lieu of kissing your hands, I kiss your

precious letters where I read my felicity." Three days after, he wrote from the hold of a yacht which was taking him from Rotterdam to Ghent: "We have fine weather and a fair wind, and besides that, good wine, good pastry, good hams, and good beds. There are only two of us, M. de M * * * and I, in a large yacht; he employs himself in writing, eating, drinking, and sleeping, and I, in thinking of you; I see nothing, and I swear to you that I do not feel sensible that I am in the company of a good *paté*, and a man of wit. My dear Pimpette is wanting to me, but I flatter myself that she will not be wanting to me always, since I travel but to make you travel yourself."

In the following letter, Voltaire relates his arrival at Paris, which he reached on Christmas Eve. "Scarce had I arrived at Paris, when I learned that M. L * * * had written a severe letter to my father against me; that he had sent him the letters which madame, your mother, had written to him, and in fine that my father has a *lettre de cachet* to have me locked up. I do not dare to show myself; I have had my father spoken to; all that could be obtained from him, was to have me sent to the islands; but he could not be prevailed upon to change his resolution regarding the will which he has made, in which he disinherits me. This is not all; for more than three weeks I have had no news of you—I do not know whether you are living, and whether you are

not living very unhappily ; I fear that you have written to me to my father's address, and that your letter has been opened by him."

Voltaire, under these sad circumstances, passed his whole time with his friends, the Jesuits, in persuading them to snatch his mistress from the protestant religion, that is, to tear her from Holland for the good pleasure of the amorous poet. He planted his batteries so wisely, he put all his forces on the field so well, that this fine scheme came very near succeeding. He continues to write: "If you have inhumanity enough to make me lose the fruit of all my misfortunes, and be obstinate enough to remain in Holland, I promise you that I shall most assuredly kill myself at the first news I have thereof. I have placed myself, on losing my head, with an attorney, to become a limb of the law, to which my father destines me ; so you see I am fixed at Paris for a long time ; you have but one way to get here, and is it possible that I can live without you ? The bishop of Evreux, in Normandy, is your cousin ; write to him, insist above all on the matter of religion ; tell him that the king desires the conversion of the huguenots, and that, being a minister of the Lord, and your relative, he should, on every consideration, favor your return. Write to me to M. de Saint Fort, at M. Alain's, attorney of the Chatelet, near the steps of the place Maubert."

We at last arrive at the catastrophe. You think

perhaps that Pimpette became a catholic for the sake of the handsome eyes of Arouet. Alas! Pimpette was a woman! Arouet far away; she thought the simpler plan was to let another make love. It was not the poet that the fair one had loved, it was the page of the ambassador of France; now the page who succeeded Voltaire in the household of the marquis de Châteauneuf, succeeded him also in the heart of Pimpette. Poor Madame du Noyer had soon to file among her letters of gallantry those of this other page to her daughter.

Voltaire, however, had not love alone in his mind, it was necessary for him to disarm his father, as angry as the father of a romance. He had not seen him since his return. Either to appease him, or in good faith, he caused him to be told that being about to depart for America, he asked as a sole favor to be permitted to embrace the paternal knees. M. Arouet pardoned him with tenderness. "But you shall follow the path which your ancestors trod, you shall at once take your place at M. Alain's." He was an attorney of the rue Perdue. Will it be believed? Voltaire, already surnamed the familiar of princes, suffered himself to be installed in this old-fashioned place! He found there a friend, Thiriot; not a friend of a day, but a friend for life. Voltaire, happily, did not grow thin over the intricacies of the law. He passed thence to the chateau of Saint Ange, in company with M. de Caumar-

tin, another friend of his father; he was to choose a profession there. At the chateau of Saint Ange, he found an old man, a passionate admirer of Henry IV., who inspired him with the idea and even the ideas of *La Henriade*. He therefore returned to Paris more of a poet than ever.

A misadventure plunged him still more deeply in poetry; one day he was taken to the Bastile, without any reason being given. Now, what was to be done at the Bastile, except to write verses! Everything conspired against this poor M. Aronet, who wished that his son's mind should be turned, perforce, to the spirit of the laws. Voltaire had been sent to the Bastile for a satire which was not his: "*I have seen these evils, and I am not yet twenty.*" He consoled himself for this injustice by singing the loves and conquests of Henry IV. At the Bastile he commenced the *Henriade* and finished *Œdipus*. The duke d'Orleans soon restored him to liberty. The marquis de Nocé, the illustrious roué, brought Voltaire to the palais-royal, on his leaving the Bastile, to present him to the prince. While waiting his turn in the antechamber to be presented, a violent thunder-storm came on; the poet, raising his eyes upward, exclaimed before a crowd of bystanders, "Things could n't go worse up above, if they had a regent to govern them." The marquis de Nocé related the *mot* in introducing Voltaire. "Monseigneur, here is young Aronet, whom you have just

taken out of the Bastile, and whom you will send back there." The marquis knew well to whom he spoke. The regent laughed to split his sides, and offered a gratification, whereupon Voltaire said to him, "I thank your royal highness that you had the kindness to provide for my board, but I beg of you not to charge yourself any more with my lodging."

He offered *Cedipus*. Thanks to high influence, this tragedy was played; thanks to the talents of the poet it had great success. M. Aronet, dissolved in tears at the close of the performance, at last gave his son permission to become a poet; better late than never. Voltaire was already accustomed to ridicule everything, even his glory; thus at a representation he appeared on the stage wearing the wig of the grand priest. The maréchal de Villiers's wife asked who that young man was who wanted to ruin the piece. Learning that it was the author himself, she sent for him to her box, and gave him her hand to kiss. "Behold," said the duke de Richelieu to him, on presenting him, "two beautiful eyes which you have made shed many tears."—"They will revenge themselves on others," answered Voltaire. The beautiful eyes revenged themselves on him. He fell in love seriously; it was his second love; but Pimpette du Noyer had scarcely entered his heart, he had not had time to sigh, he did not take time to regret. Things did not pass off so with the fair maréchale, he hoped always. She deigned to re

ceive his rhymes and his sighs, but that was all. Nevertheless, he was twenty-four years old, was already celebrated; a portrait by Largillière represents him to us full of grace and spirit, a mocking mouth, marked profile, the air of a gentleman, bold forehead, a fine hand ornamented with a fine ruffle. In truth, the maréchale was truly virtuous, to resist Voltaire under the regency! For more than a year Voltaire lived only for her. "She has made me lose a great deal of time," he said at a later day. The ingrate! the madman! is it wasting time, when one is twenty-four, to love?

He continued to live among the nobility. His intimacy with certain enemies of the regent, among others the duke de Richelieu and the baron de Gortz had exiled him from Paris. He returned there with a tragedy, *Artémise*, which fell dead, or something near it. This was a matter of course; at Paris one never succeeds twice in succession. He suffered himself to be consoled by Mademoiselle Lecouvreur, that model of the great actresses. He wished to love again on another scene; and accompanied madame de Rupelmonde to Holland. While passing through Brussels, he visited J. B. Rousseau. They embraced as brethren in poetry, but unfortunately for friendship, they read verses to one another. J. B. Rousseau commenced; Voltaire, after having heard his "*Ode to Posterity*," said with a smile, "My friend, that is a letter which will never reach its ad-

dress." And saying this, he took a manuscript and read to the exiled poet an epistle to madame de Rupelmonde. J. B. Rousseau, who then took refuge in religion, accused Voltaire of impiety. Thereupon they separated, enemies in verse and in prose to their deaths.

It is seen that Voltaire's life is all strown with sallies. I endeavor to avoid them, but in vain, for they mark every step he took. Wit has, so to speak, marked out his path. Wit, whosoever it be, even Voltaire's, fatigues when it occupies too much space. It is the sun which pours down over the entire landscape, without leaving a bit of shade for the dazzled eye. I like wit, but I like revery and naïveté better, that is to say, the wit of the heart. Who would not like to see this youth of Voltaire's thoughtful occasionally? Did he never look on the sky with a reverent thought? Did Nature never show him a corner of her robe? His mistress, no matter which one, did she never shed a tear, a tear of tenderness when he kissed her eyes? But we must pardon Voltaire for the wit which took possession of him from head to heart: celebrated when twenty years old, what had he but his wit, to combat his innumerable enemies with! You know that he was always on the battle-field of thought, almost alone on his own side. A man does not defend himself by his heart.

VOL. 1.—3

III.

VOLTAIRE, desirous of publishing the *Henriade*, assembled at the house of the president de Maisons a circle of curious literary men selected from the fashionable world. They were so severe on him that he lost patience and threw his manuscript into the fire. It cost the president Hainault a fine pair of ruffles to save the poem from the flames. The poet was reconciled to looking at his manuscript again. While he was retouching it with a more confident hand, the abbé Desfontaines, it is not known from what copy, had the poem printed under the title of *The League*. The famished abbé was not contented with taking a stipend from two printers, but dared to add some lines after his own fashion. The poem was received with éclat; disfigured as it was, it obtained Voltaire so many eulogies that the poet pardoned the abbé. Voltaire in his turn wished to have the work printed, but the priests, reproaching him with embellishing and reanimating the errors of semi-pelagianism, set to work to have the privilege of printing refused him. To counteract these cabals, Voltaire dedicated his poem to the king, but the king would not accept the dedication. From that day, war was declared. Until then, Voltaire had been irreligious only after the amiable and careless fashion of his masters, the abbé de Chateaufort and the abbé de Chaulieu. He was no longer content with laughing

wittily at the hypocrites ; he began to laugh angrily. "What!" exclaimed he, "then I am destined to fight honest gentlemen, who number among themselves the abbé Desfontaines." It will be seen what was the real starting-point of the quarrel. The abbé Desfontaines, saved from jail by Voltaire, trimmed his pen to take up the defence of the church against him. How could Voltaire be quiet? With the most grateful remembrances of the Jesuits, could Voltaire humiliate himself before the majesty of the abbé Desfontaines, their representative? The conflict was to take place on another battle-field. Was the poet to bow before the glory of the regent who had recompensed him for a witticism, or before the power of the king who had refused his dedication? Voltaire would then be in conflict with both church and court. A third power remained to protect him, and which was, perhaps, to repress his struggles for liberty. But it was not to be so; the noblesse were to lose Voltaire by their own act. One day at dinner at the duke de Sully's, he began to oppose, after his uncere- monious fashion, an opinion of the chevalier de Rohan-Chabot. As wit and sense were on Vol- taire's side, the chevalier said, with a proud, disdain- ful voice: "Who, pray, is this young man who talks so loud?"—"It is," answered the poet, "a man who has not the weight of a great name. I am the first of mine, you are the last of yours." The next day but one after, as Voltaire was dining again at the duke de

Sully's, he was told that some one wanted him at the door of the hotel. He went. A man whom he did not know called to him from the interior of his carriage; he advanced, the unknown seized him by the collar of his coat, at the same instant a valet gave him five or six blows with a stick, after which the chevalier de Rohan-Chabot, posted a few steps off, cried out, "That's enough!" Were not these words the most cutting insult? Voltaire indignantly returned to the hotel, related his fatal adventure, and entreated the duke de Sully to aid him in his revenge. The duke refused. "Very well," said Voltaire, "let the outrage fall upon yourselves." Thereupon he went directly home and erased the name of Sully from the *Henriade*. Knowing well that the tribunals would not do justice to a poet against a courtier, he swore to do himself justice. He shut himself up and learned at the same time the sword exercise to fight for his life, and the English language to be able to live out of France after the duel. This design showed the man of head and the man of heart. As soon as he knew the use of his sword, he defied his disloyal adversary in such contemptuous terms, that the chevalier did not dare to refuse to fight. They agreed to meet the next day, but in the interval, the family of the chevalier showed the prime minister a quatrain of the poet's, which contained, at the same time, an epigram against his excellency, and a declaration of love to his mistress.

Voltaire was taken to the Bastile during the night. Less than that would give a man a taste for democracy. Thus, at thirty, Voltaire found himself alone, without friends, without defenders, without money, awaiting exile in imprisonment—alone against the court, which was nothing—against the noblesse, which was not much more—against the Jesuits, who were everything! A weak and cowardly spirit would have asked pardon, and suffered conversion. Voltaire allowed himself to be punished in order to have the right to avenge himself.

After six months of the Bastile, he was permitted to leave, but “by the gate of exile.” He went to England, the country of the liberty of the mind and of the pen. Scarce at London, the remembrance of the outrage forced him to return secretly to Paris, in the hope of at last meeting his adversary face to face. On the point of being discovered, he returned to London without being revenged. “At least glory shall avenge me; this name which he wished to degrade, shall shine eternally in the face of his own.”

In England, Voltaire suffered himself to be led away by the philosophy of Shaftesbury, set to rhyme by Pope, and commented on by Bolingbroke. Voltaire had only been irreligious by sallies, he had mocked at the mysteries of catholicism with the wit and the carelessness of the epicureans of the temple. In England, in the school founded by Newton, he

sought for truth, he collected all the weapons which, at a later period he broke against the church. From London he saw his country the slave of prejudices, the people the slaves of the nobles, the nobles the slaves of the courtiers, the courtiers the slaves of the king and his mistress, and the king and his mistress the slaves of the Jesuits. "He swore," says Condorcet, "to render himself, by the mere power of his genius, the benefactor of an entire people, by snatching them from their errors." Condorcet, ennobled the design of Voltaire, who was above all things desirous to avenge himself in the name of truth, whatever the truth might cost.

In England, as a relaxation to his philosophic studies, he published the *Henriade*, without the favors of the abbé Desfontaines. This edition, published at an immense price, was the commencement of Voltaire's fortune. The entire English court had subscribed, without doubt, on account of the dedication to the queen. "It is a part of my destiny, like that of my hero, to be protected by a queen of England." Voltaire passed three years in England; he studied there the poets and philosophers, conceived the tragedy of *Brutus*, sketched out the *Lettres Anglaises*, and took notes for the *History of Charles XII.* from the recital of a servant of this adventurous monarch. He returned to Paris secretly, but resolved to return to the Bastille rather than not see his country again. He hid himself in a remote faubourg, saw a

few faithful friends, and set to work to become rich in order to become strong. When a poet pursues fortune, he is no easier repulsed than another. Fortune loves people of wit, almost as much as she does fools. Voltaire, in less than three years, became six times a millionaire. It must be said that he was bold and fortunate; he commenced by risking the proceeds of the edition of the *Henriade* in the lottery which the comptroller-general had established to liquidate the city debts; it was *rouge et noir*. Voltaire quadrupled his crowns. This was not enough for a man of his mettle. He risked again all he possessed in the Cadiz trade and Barbary wheat; finally, as a last financial operation, he took an interest in the provisioning of the army of Italy, after which he reunited his millions, and invested them in all sorts of securities. He had as much as four hundred thousand livres income; and, although ill paid in many places, after having lost much, built a city, given with a royal hand, and spent with one often prodigal, he had left at the end of his life more than two hundred thousand livres income in real estate and personal property. You see that the poet did not build castles in the air only. If some die of misery, others die twenty times too rich. In the face of Malfilâtre, of Gilbert, and of Jean Jacques, who lived on alms, do you not see Fontenelle pass with his income of eighty thousand livres? Gentil Bernard with more than half, Voltaire with more than double? And note

that in this noble profession, there is not a single bankruptcy to record.

Voltaire began to live at Paris without inquietude, when Mademoiselle Leconvreux died, whom he had tenderly loved. As burial was refused to this illustrious actress, the indignant poet wrote that elegy on the occasion, which breathes all the English hardihood. The priests, who, by acts of the parliaments, had no one left to excommunicate but actors and actresses, took the field again against Voltaire, "indignant," says Condorcet, "that a poet should dispute with them half of their empire." Voltaire, not wishing to return a third time to the Bastille, took refuge at Rouen, under the name and with the retinue of an English nobleman. He there had the *Histoire de Charles XII.*, and the *Lettres Anglaises* privately printed. When the storm had blown over, he returned to Paris, resolved to again attempt the perilous victories of the stage, hoping that the spectators, once on his side, would defend him against fanaticism. He had *Brutus* played without any very great difficulty. It was only half understood that he made himself the safeguard of the rights of the people; the piece had only a half-success, in spite of the second scene, and in spite of the fifth act. After the representation, Fontenelle said to Voltaire, "I do not think that tragedy is your right field; your style is too strong, too pompous, too brilliant."—"I will immediately reperuse your pastorals," answered Voltaire.

He had almost finished *La Mort de César* ; but he did not dare to risk on the stage a tragedy in three acts, and without women. He brought out *Eriphile*, which fell dead. Voltaire, like a man who recovers courage from a defeat, shut himself up, seized the subject of *Zaire*, finished the tragedy in eighteen days, and had it represented the same season. It was received with great enthusiasm ; its success became prodigious ; it was decided that it was "for all time, the tragedy of pure souls and tender hearts." He did not give himself time to enjoy his success, but had two other tragedies represented one after another, both of which failed through a couple of sallies from the parterre. It is known that *Marianne* could not be continued, after this simple observation of a spectator : "The queen drinks." It is also known that *Adelaïde Duquesclin* had the same fate, thanks to this response from the parterre to a *mot* of Vendôme : "Es tu content, Coucy ?—*Couci-couci*."—The whole house enjoyed the joke.

Voltaire led a life of great excitement ; he only half tasted the intoxication of success, he forgot very soon the vexation of a failure. He had recovered his taste for the great world ; fêted everywhere, above all by the women, he passed his happiest hours in giving and receiving compliments. Do not think that he then held vigils before the midnight lamp of inspiration—no ; his vigils were at suppers

and the faro-table, where he gallantly lost some twelve thousand livres in an evening.

While ruminating in the morning on his pillow, he constructed the "*Temple du Goût*." As he allowed himself, according to his custom, to be right in his judgments on the poets of the past and present century, he excited innumerable literary animosities against himself; for in literature, as in everything else, there is always a party who make it a point to be wrong. The little tempest raised by the literati became so strong, that Voltaire, will it be believed, was threatened with a *lettre de cachet* if he did not exile himself of his own accord. He understood then better than ever these words of the Norman Fontenelle, "If I had my hands full of truths, I should take care not to open them." He concealed himself at a lady-friend's near the palais-royal.

Tempests of all sorts broke over him. An infidel bookseller circulated an edition of the *Lettres Anglaises*, which had become *Lettres Philosophiques*. Voltaire took flight; while his book, condemned in his place, was burnt by the hands of the hangman. The devotional furore was then at its height; miracles had returned with the deacon Paris, and the reverend father Girard; people let themselves be crucified out of love of God, as if God could accept this impious parody of a divine mystery. "I shall return soon to Paris," Voltaire had said on leaving, "for the Jesuits make the most of their respite."

He returned soon in fact, and, becoming gradually emboldened, suffered the *Épître à Uranie* to be printed; a new uproar, a new *lettre de cachet*, which Voltaire becoming aware of, said the epistle was by the abbé de Chaulieu, who had just opportunely died. As it was, this epistle did not injure the abbé de Chaulieu's reputation as a poet or as a Christian. Scarcely did Voltaire breathe freely when, in his ardor for combat, and wishing to turn his arms elsewhere, he published *La Mort de César*. This time, his publication was authorized by the court. He persuaded the courtiers, most of whom had become his friends, that the play was not the least in the world republican; the court, on solicitation, shut their eyes.

When Voltaire did not do battle with his pen, he did so by his words. Welcomed and sought after by statesmen and noblemen, from curiosity and from fear, if not from curiosity and admiration, he almost always preserved his freedom of speech. One day at the house of the keeper of the seals, a man was spoken of who had been arrested for having fabricated a *lettre de cachet*. Voltaire asked what was done to that new class of forgers. "They are hanged."—"Very good, provided those who sign real ones are treated in the same way."

A few days after, as some one was reciting in a corner of the saloon, amidst roars of laughter, some fragments of *La Pucelle*, the keeper of the seals

threatened the poet with a new *lettre de cachet*, if he ever saw fit to have the poem printed. Voltaire, tired of living continually at the door of the Bastille, or on the road to exile, tired of gaming, by which he lost a great deal of money, disgusted with most of the frivolous circles where he heard too much talk of the genius of Crébillon and the wit of Fontenelle, resolved to withdraw himself from the world, not like a St. Anthony, but like a well-inspired poet; he retired to a château with a fair mistress, resolved to live like Adam after the fall—that is to say, to devour in solitude the fruit of science and the fruit of love, the bitterness of the one making endurable the bitterness of the other.

Madame du Châtelet was, in the eighteenth century, the free liver *par excellence*; like certain dames of our days, she had dispensed with the restraints of marriage; but the husbands of those days were much easier to get along with than those of the present times. M. the marquis du Chatelet lived in community with the marquise du Chatelet and M. de Voltaire, her lover. For several years previous, Voltaire had been smitten with the graces of this lady, charming on many accounts. They were two unquiet and turbulent creatures, always ready to take fire, always armed for controversy, always burning for tumult and eclat. Madame du Chatelet was no better catholic than Voltaire; she had gayly placed on her escutcheon the profane sentence

of the poet, "*Happiness is the aim, he who acquires it has gained his salvation.*" Like Voltaire, she had a passion for science and *petits soupers*, for the fine arts and gaming, for philosophy and fine clothes. They saw one another—they loved one another. M. du Châtelet did not complain—he was another philosopher.

Then therefore all three retired to the château de Cirey, on the confines of Champagne and Lorraine. Do not suppose that they passed their time like poets or like lovers, in cooing elegies or madrigals under the green arcades of the park. Cirey was not entirely the terrestrial paradise as Voltaire called it. "I have the happiness of being in a terrestrial paradise where there is an Eve, and where I have not the disadvantage of being Adam." Madame du Châtelet, who already knew Latin, set to work to learn three or four living languages. She translated Newton, analyzed Leibnitz, and was a candidate for the prize of the Academy of Sciences. Voltaire did not want to be left behind, he made himself a *savant*, almost as much of a *savant* as his mistress. The Academy of Sciences had proposed as the subject of a prize essay, the nature and propagation of fire. Voltaire and madame du Châtelet were competitors; they were beaten by Euler, but their pieces were inserted in the collection of prize essays. They soon reappeared before the academy as adversaries in the dispute on the measure of living forces. Voltaire

defended Newton against Leibnitz, madame du Châtelet Leibnitz against Newton. The academy gave judgment for Voltaire, but Voltaire gave judgment for madame du Châtelet.

Is it not a curious and mournful spectacle to behold these two lovers finding nothing better to do than to dispute on points of philosophy, physics, and metaphysics, when the sky smiled over them, and talked to them of love by the voice of roses and of birds, in a château which was almost a garden of Armida? Their love had nothing of a pastoral charm; now and then tender, it was most often full of storms; in their fits of jealousy or anger, they went so far—must I say it?—as to fight—as lovers fight. Voltaire, Voltaire though he was, always ended by yielding; the storm over, they wept like children. M. du Châtelet came to the rescue, and reconciled them with the zeal of the husbands of those times.

At Cirey, Voltaire grew a little tired of love and science; he returned to literature with greater ardor, *Alzire*, *Zulime*, *Mahomet*, *Mérope*, and *L'Enfant Prodigue*, are the fruits of his retreat. It was also at Cirey that he finished the *Discours sur l'Homme*, and *La Pucelle*. His retreat, besides, was anything but calm and quiet, for besides the charming wrath of madame du Châtelet, he had to undergo persecutions without number. Cirey did not always shelter him from his enemies. He was twice forced to pass

into the Low Countries. Persecution had at last become pleasing to him, he had become habituated to strife and tumult. To it we owe his pamphlets against his enemies and himself, his innumerable letters scattered everywhere, either for attack or for defence. The enemy whom Voltaire most dreaded was oblivion.

His ordinary journey at that time was from Cirey to Flanders. Madame du Châtelet, "the nymph of Cirey," the blonde Emilie, that learned Eve, whose blue eyes poured so much warmth into Voltaire's heart, went to plead before the Brussels tribunals a suit growing out of the will of Trichoteau, her uncle. The courts of Brussels took from seven to eight years to examine the case; it was therefore necessary for seven or eight years to pass from love or philosophy to the tedium of a ruinous lawsuit. This is the reason Voltaire remained so long in Flanders. He resigned himself to it with a good grace on his mistress's account. Nevertheless, he says somewhere that it is a little sad to pass the last years of one's youth in going to law on the will of M. Trichoteau. He did not, however, lose his time at Brussels. Madame du Châtelet was often a traveller. They went together to teach the Flemish nobility the follies of the Parisian world, gaming, suppers, and fêtes. Voltaire has left the souvenir of a fête given by him to the marquise du Châtelet, the princesse de Chimay, and the duchesse d'Arenberg. He gave this fête, not as a poet who makes bouquets

and fireworks in verse. "See how well I play the part of a lord;" he exclaims, "I did not dish up a single verse in my own style."

At Brussels, he expiated on the tomb of Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, his injustice toward him. In a letter to a bookseller of the exiled poet, he declared, at the same time that he subscribed for his works, that he regretted that he had not been able to reconcile himself with a man worthy to be loved. It was from Brussels that he sent a writing-desk to the king of Prussia, with these words: "Soliman sends a sabre to Scanderberg."

He went several times to the Hague for his books. The Holland of Rembrandt made no impression upon him. He did not linger in a charmed revery by the fields of Paul Potter and the fords of Ruysdael. He wrote to Maupertius: "When we both set out for Clèves, and you turned to the right and I to the left, I thought we were at the last judgment where God separates his elect from the damned. *Divus Fredericus* said to you: 'Seat yourself on my right hand in the paradise of Berlin;' and to me, 'Depart accursed into Holland!' I am then in this phlegmatic hell, far from the divine fire where you are. For the love of God! bestow on me in charity some sparks in these stagnant waters where I have caught cold."

He was never long without visiting "*la grande capitale des Bagatelles*," to assist in literary brig

andage." Brigandage! would he content himself at the present day with that energetic word? Paris soon tired him. "This vortex of a world is a hundred-fold more pernicious than those of Descartes." At Paris, he, however, always sought solitude, sometimes as a poet, sometimes as a man proscribed. Thus, while Emilie was discussed at the hotel Richelieu, he isolated himself at the hotel de Brie in the rue Clocheperche.

Shall I say that Voltaire, after having declared himself the rival of Homer and of Sophocles, consented, in 1746, to knock, for the third time, at the door of the academy, to replace the president Bouhier? Mundane ovations assailed him for several months. After the representation of *Mérope*, he was called for by the spectators; taken by force to a box occupied by the maréchale de Villars and her daughter-in-law, the parterre requested, or rather commanded, the latter to kiss Voltaire, which was done with a very good grace.

After this triumph, the most beautiful and agreeable he had ever gained, his genius descended to court intrigues. He wanted to have the entrée to Versailles, even if only by the back door. He commenced by gaining admission at Etioles, where he followed madame du Châtelet. Madame de Pompadour received him like a woman of wit, who liked open books. Voltaire became her master for the season in the art of thinking. From gallantry

he passed with her to politics. With a little patience Voltaire would have become a minister. He became a politician, he was sent as ambassador to the king of Prussia; he wrote for peace to the empress of Russia; he was on the point of betraying the secrets of his friends, the English. To obtain his first audience of the king, he went direct to the camp of Fribourg with an epistle in his hand. The king did not comprehend that Voltaire was better worth gaining than a German city; he received him as a poet of no consequence. Voltaire was not discouraged. The prime minister, and the second minister, madame de Pompadour, and the marquis d'Argenson were on his side; with such high protectors what would he not reach! He attained, quite out of breath, to the place of a gentleman of the chamber, and the appointment of historiographer of France! This cost him dear. He consented to compose a ridiculous ballet, the *Princesse de Navarre*, for the Versailles fêtes on the arrival of the Spanish infanta. He also composed, besides the poem of Fontenoy, a heavy inventory of a poetical battle, the *Temple de la Gloire*. What is to be said of this parody of Metastasio's poem, except that it was outrageously applauded at Versailles for this good line, "*Chantons le plus grand roi du monde.*" Intoxicated with this poor triumph, he endeavored to make himself a courtier. After the representation, he approached the royal box, and with the uncereemonious

air of a great poet addressing a king, said to him, "Is Trajan content?" The king, who did not like men of wit, Voltaire less than others, made no answer. The next day, Voltaire sold his post of gentleman, to become free again. Thus M. de Chateaubriand deceives himself, or wishes to deceive us, when he asserts that Voltaire would have abandoned his opinions for a place at court. If he had really been a courtier, he would not have been offended at the king's silence; he would have continued to burn incense, whatsoever face the god had shown. Voltaire was born a freeman; we must interpret his contradictions in good faith.

A new religious storm being about to burst forth, Voltaire had *Mahomet* printed, which had been forbidden to be represented on the stage, and, to ridicule the priests, dedicated it to Pope Benedict XIV. The pope, who understood Voltaire, responded with eulogies, medals, and benedictions, with which the philosopher returned to Cirey.

The hosts of the château went from time to time to pay their court to King Stanislaus. Lunéville was then the Versailles of Lorraine: the marquise de Boufflers was the Pompadour of the place; she had chosen her courtiers among men of letters. She reckoned among her poets, Saint-Lambert and the count de Tressan; they were two bad poets, but two courtiers full of grace and wit. Madame du Châtelet, with all her philosophy, allowed herself to be

taken with the madrigals of Saint-Lambert; madame du Châtelet was forty-two, the sun of her best days was about to set for her. Why not seek a little joy when its last ray was about to flicker and die? Why not bid a tender adieu to love when it is about to take flight for ever! It is so sweet to blind one's self, still to believe that the heart will again be young, to fancy that spring-time is come again to the soul. Madame du Châtelet cast off all the rags of philosophy to snatch with an imprudent hand, the fatal scarf of pleasure. Love cost her her life. She presented an infant either to M. du Châtelet, or to Voltaire, or to Saint-Lambert. Poor Voltaire had passed to the rank of friend! A friend and a lover, without counting a husband, was not bad for a philosophical lady, who annotated Leibnitz. She carried out her philosophy to the end. Voltaire wrote from Lunéville, September 4, 1719, to the comte d'Argental: "Madame du Châtelet, while scribbling at her Newton to-night, felt ill at ease; she called her *femme-de-chambre*, who only had time to stretch out her apron before she received a little girl, who was placed in a cradle. The mother arranged her papers, put herself to bed, and everything is as quiet as a mouse at the time I am writing." The same day Voltaire wrote as follows to the abbé de Voisenon: "My dear abbé Greluchon [does not this nickname furnish a capital portrait of Voisenon?] you must know that to-night, madame du Châtelet being at her desk ac-

according to her laudable custom, exclaimed, 'Why! I feel something!' This something was a little girl, who came into the world forthwith, and was placed on a volume of geometry which happened to be near, and the mother went to bed." He repented, six days afterward, of having taken this tone of pleasantry; madame du Châtelet died. He wept as hard as he could for her, although a private ring in which the miniature of Saint-Lambert had replaced his own, which had replaced the duc de Richelieu, which had replaced ——, had taught him all. Worthy M. du Châtelet was present at this discovery, weeping, like Voltaire, with all his might. "Monsieur the marquis," said the poet to him, "this is a thing which neither of us should boast over."

Voltaire, inconsolable, wished to console M. du Châtelet; he accompanied him to Cirey. "My dear Voisenon, what a hapless day! I shall soon come to pour into your bosom the tears which will never cease to flow. I do not abandon M. du Châtelet. I shall, therefore, again behold the chateau which friendship had adorned, and where I hoped to die in the arms of your fair friend." At Cirey, he wrote to M. d'Argental, that the chateau had become a horrible desert to him. Nevertheless the places where she dwelt were dear to him, he would have a sombre joy in finding again the traces of her sojourn in Paris. He exclaimed that he had not lost a mistress, but a half of himself, a soul which was sister to his

own—the genius of Leibnitz united with sensibility, a man of genius and a woman of feeling. He would not be consoled, he wished to follow her even to the tomb, her who was faithless to him. He returned to Paris as pale as a trappist. Is this really the Voltaire who was always laughing? They pitied, they made a jest of him. Patience, he will laugh again, great griefs are not eternal. How long a time will he weep, this man who implores death with such loud cries? A little less than six weeks! Saint Lambert wept a fortnight; the husband alone wept longer.

IV.

DURING this sojourn in Paris, he lived in great style, in order to distract his mind. He opened two mansions, one in the rue de Richelieu, the other in the rue de Longpont. The first was devoted to playing comedy and suppers; in the second, Voltaire worked. Jealous at seeing Crébillon the Tragic fêted at the court, he had resolved to contend with him by rewriting all his pieces. Lekain came to his aid. Voltaire was the poet of Lekain, Lekain became the actor of Voltaire. In spite of the court, Voltaire was victorious in the contest. Could one believe, that in writing *Oreste*, *Rome sauvée*, and *Le Triumvirat*, he had no other object? Singular aim, to write three tragedies to put King Louis XV., madame de Pompadour, and himself, in the wrong.

The king of Prussia and the duchesse du Maine avenged him sufficiently for the injustice of the court of France; he was fêted at Sceaux like a prince of the blood. The king of Prussia wrote to him, "I respect you as my master in eloquence, I love you as a virtuous friend." The motive which decided Voltaire to set out for Potsdam was a copy of verses of Frederick's, in which a bad poet was a genius *at his rising*, who was to console the world for Voltaire's *setting*. "The king of Prussia must be informed," said Voltaire, "that I am not about to set yet." He departed. Frederick received him better than a king, for, to Frederick, he was the king of poets and philosophers. He found at Potsdam an apartment adjoining that of Frederick, the chamberlain's key, the cross of merit, a pension of twenty thousand livres, and finally, a table and equipages to his own use, at the sole charge of correcting the king's writings. Voltaire imagined that he was about to find liberty in a court, and a friend in a king; the illusion quickly vanished. Kings are always kings; above all, philosopher kings. As Voltaire, on his side, was a king, he quitted Potsdam, his chamberlain's cross, his friend Frederick, to create a court of his own. "On leaving my palace of Alcinous, I went and passed a month with the duchess of Saxe-Gotha, the best princess of the earth, the sweetest, the wisest, the most composed, and who, thank God! does not make verses. After

that, I passed some days at a country-house of the landgrave of Hesse, who was still farther removed from poetry than the princess of Gotha; I breathed again." His adventure with the police of Frankfort, touching *l'œuvre de poésies du roy son maître*, is well known.

Escaped from Frankfort, he went to pass some days at Mayence, saying that it was to dry his garments, wet from shipwreck. The elector-palatine sent for him, and received him with splendid fêtes. Not daring to return to Paris, where they would not pardon him for having sung with the king of Prussia, where, moreover, there had circulated an irregular edition of the *Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations*, he went to live at Colmar, calling himself, according to his custom, a bird of passage. He worked there at the *Annals of the Empire*, with the assistance of certain persons learned in German legislation. Learning that a short time before copies of *Bayle's Dictionary* had been burnt on the public square of Colmar, he took an aversion to that place, and retired to the abbey of Senonsces alongside of Calmet, who tried to convert him. "I have not become a devotee, but I have made myself a Benedictine," wrote Voltaire. He retreated, in fact, to the rich library of the abbey. Thence he set out for Lyons in company with his niece, and Collini his secretary. He found at Lyons his friend, the duke de Richelieu. The Lyonnese received him

with transports of joy; they played his pieces at the theatre, and serenaded him. It is from Lyons that this celebrated *mot* dates: "It would be well for every monarchy," he said to Richelieu, "to have a Cromwell once in every fifty years."

From Lyons, Voltaire went to Geneva; on his arrival the gates were closed, but scarce had he uttered his name, when they were opened wide. He was desirous of residing at Geneva, but the rigor of the protestants terrified him as much as the zeal of the catholics. He bought the beautiful country-seat called *Les Délices*, and lived there in great style, receiving a great deal of company and performing comedy. He was often seen promenading the park dressed as an Arab, with a long beard, reciting the part of Mohabar, or in a Grecian dress reciting Narbas. As soon as he was settled, the actors of Paris came to pay their court, by playing with him at his theatre; savans, literary men, and princes, followed the actors on the road to *Les Délices*. It is remembered that Montesquieu was present at a representation of the *Orphan of China*, and fell fast asleep. Voltaire, who perceived him, threw his hat at his head, exclaiming, "He thinks that he is at a meeting of the academy."

As he could not live in quiet in spite of his sixty-four years, in spite of all the showers and tempests which he had undergone, he did not content himself with *Les Délices*, but bought a magnificent mansion

VOL. I. — 4

at Lausanne with fifteen windows in front, where he could see from his bed, fifteen leagues of Lake Lemman, Savoy, and the Alps ; it was his winter residence. Soon discontented with not being able to live in France, he abandoned Lausanne and *Les Délices*, for the manor of Ferney, where he erected, after his own designs, his celebrated château. He did not forget either the theatre, or the cabinet of natural history, or the library, or the picture-gallery. The dependencies of the château were of the most enormous character ; to give an idea of them, the woods which they comprehended were valued at seven hundred thousand livres. This château was marvellously well situated for a view ; at the horizon, eternal snows ; at the foot of the walls, beds of roses. Ferney was a village almost abandoned ; the church, quite dilapidated, threatened to come down at the next storm. As this church cut off a pleasant prospect, Voltaire had it pulled down, with the intention of building another elsewhere. See, on this subject, what he wrote to the count d'Argental. " As I passionately love to be the master I have pulled down the church ; I have taken the bells, the altar, the confessionals, the baptismal fonts. I have sent my parishioners to hear mass a league off ; the lieutenant criminel and the procureur du roi, have come to draw up papers. I have made everybody walk off. What does monseigneur the bishop of Annecy complain of ? His God and mine was lodged in a stable,

and I have lodged him in a temple ; the Christ was of worm-eaten wood, and I have had him gilt like an emperor." This letter was only half impious up to these lines, "Send me your portrait and that of Madame Scaliger, I will put them on my high altar." The church finished, he had these words inscribed on the portal : "Voltaire to God." A few days afterward, he preached in the church unceremoniously on good works. There was not much of the humble catholic in this, but Voltaire was then atoning for many of his sins. After having built a château and a church, he built a village, almost a city, where he invited all those without means elsewhere ; he founded there a manufactory of watches, which soon did business to the amount of 400,000 livres a year. He had marshes drained and waste lands cleared, which he relinquished to the labors of husbandmen. In spite of all the benefits he conferred he was not in safety ; the bishops of the neighborhood demanded with urgency of the parliament that such a man should be for ever banished from the territory of France. In a critical moment, he communicated in the church at Ferney, saying that he wished to perform his duty as a Christian, as an officer of the king, and lord of the manor. The bishop of Annecy, not believing in the good faith of the poet, forbade all the curés of his diocese to confess him, give him absolution, or administer the communion to him. Voltaire, not wishing to have the law laid down to him by a bishop, even in religious mat-

ters, put himself to bed, played the sick man, maintained to his physician that he was about to die; had himself absolved by a capuchin, demanded the eucharist by way of a viaticum, communicated in his chamber, and had record taken of the fact by a notary. This sacrilegious action was regarded as a piece of cowardice by the philosophers, and as an impiety by the catholics, which was all that Voltaire gained by it.

But he did not stop at this sad chapter. To amuse himself, without doubt, he had himself appointed father temporal of the capuchins in the province of Gex. He was even received as a capuchin in person, and took all the fathers under his protection. He wrote then to the duke de Richelieu, "I should like much, monseigneur, to give you my benediction before I die. This term will appear rather strong to you, but it is in exact truth. I am a capuchin, our general who is at Rome has just sent me a diploma; I call myself brother spiritual and father temporal of the capuchins." A short time before, he had hoped to become a cardinal on the faith of the duke de la Vallière, on condition that he would translate in verse the *Psalms* and the *Book of Wisdom*, for the use of madame de Pompadour.

Ferney became a holy city to the philosophers of Europe, as Mecca was for the mussulmans; they made pilgrimages there. Voltaire was surnamed the patriarch; every day brought him a friend or a stranger, a wit or a prince, a man of the sword, a gen-

tleman of the long robe or a churchman, a painter like Vernet, a sculptor like Pigale, or a musician like Grétry. The ladies came in great numbers during the fine season. They played comedy every evening at Ferney ; a ball followed the comedy ; Voltaire, happy to make others happy, appeared there for an instant, and then shut himself up again to resume his labors. He had succeeded in living a solitary and laborious life in the midst of bustle, splendor, and fêtes. What was wanting to his happiness? But was he happy? The fortune and glory which dazzled him were there, but when he turned his eyes toward the sky, toward the future, toward heaven, a sombre inquietude devoured his heart: "Where am I going?" he asked himself, with some terror. He, however, soon fell back into the whirlpool of the joys and sorrows of this world ; he made war on his enemies, the critics and the devotees, more cruelly than ever. Lefranc de Pompignan fell on the battle-field, riddled with pleasantries ; Fréron saw himself taken off on the stage of the théâtre Français ; twenty others came off hobbling. The desire of revenging himself led away Voltaire, and inspired him with cynical buffooneries. His bitterness against J. J. Rousseau is particularly to be deplored. He at once recognised his genius. But it must be confessed that Jean-Jacques was not always a man who acted with good taste. When he was beset on account of his *Emile*, he responded to Voltaire's offer of an asylum, thus: "I do not like you ; you have corrupted my

republic by exhibiting plays." After this answer, anger dictated to Voltaire the most unworthy satires against this man of genius, poor and solitary, banished from Geneva, his native land ; banished from Paris, his adopted country.

In the midst of this wilful blindness toward his enemies and toward religion, Voltaire preserved some claims to the gratitude of humanity. A destitute young girl of the blood of Corneille was recommended to his care. "It is the duty of an old soldier," he said, "to assist the daughter of his general." He invited mademoiselle de Corneille to Ferney, gave her a Christian education, dowered her with the proceeds of the *Commentaires sur Corneille*, and married her to a young gentleman of the neighborhood. The stories of Calas, of Montbailly, of the count de Lally, in which Voltaire made himself so nobly the defender of the oppressed, are too well known for it to be needful for me to repeat them. He had, besides, the glory of provoking the edict of Louis XVI., which affranchized the serfs of Mount Jura. He did not occupy his whole time in combating religion, in defending his reputation, in avenging the victims of human justice. A great number of his works are dated from Ferney, among others *L'Histoire de l'Empire de Russie*, *L'Histoire du parlement de Paris*, *Tancrède*, *L'Ecossaïse*, and tales, poems, and letters without number.

Like the poets of the time I love to make my

journey to Ferney. The painters went to Rome, the poets to Ferney. I enter a small room where books of all languages and of all ideas are scattered about. There are two men at work on the destinies or the chances of the world. Voltaire who dictates, Vannières who writes. I bow before Voltaire, who stretches out his hand without interrupting the conclusion of a sentence. "Permit me," says Vannières, "I think that you are mistaken about the texts." "Keep on," says Voltaire, "I am mistaken, but I am right. Truth before all things, sincerity will follow." While he is speaking, I regard him from head to foot; he is in a curious dress, and would make a worthy pendant to Jean-Jacques as an Armenian. His face full of fire peeps out from a gigantic periwig, a waistcoat trimmed with fur, breeches of doeskin, his feet in slippers and his hands full of books; thus Voltaire appeared to me. While dictating he talks to me about Paris, of a rascal called Desfontaines, of a fellow called Fréron: he talks to me of poetry like a man who has not taken time to be a poet. I speak to him of his glory, I ask the favor of subscribing for his statue. "Alas! I am quite naked for a poet who is neither as young nor as comely as Apollo, but I shall not trouble myself about it, that rogue of a Fréron will dress me. But come, I have talked nonsense enough for this morning, let us take a walk." He conducts me to his park. While I admire in all sincerity the gran-

deur of the scene, he, little sensible to these marvels, ridicules in a lively enough manner everything which comes into his head. He exhibits the wit of Candide at every step. On turning a corner we meet the reverend father Adam. "Let me introduce Father Adam, who is not the first man of the world." The worthy man bows and smiles with resignation. He awaits with patience for the first tear of repentance from the great sinner. "Father Adam, where are you going?"—"To church."—"Lazy fellow." The reverend father can not repress a smile. "You forget that it is time for our game of chess." We return to the château and pass to the saloon. Voltaire sits down to the board and calls for coffee. Already very animated, he becomes still more so; Father Adam does not dare to profit by his advantages, he lets him win. It is known that Voltaire had threatened Father Adam that he would throw his peruke in his face, if he dared to beat him. One day the poor father, sure of checkmating him, rose in terror, escaped by the window, and disappeared in the park. Meanwhile Madame Denis comes in sullenly, and embraces her uncle; she complains of ennui; Voltaire calls for coffee. Breakfast is served, Voltaire takes only coffee and water. Visitors arrive, he gives them audience, amusing himself at the same time with their gravity. He pleasantly corrects their extravagant compliments. Thus an advocate presents himself full of provincial eloquence; "I salute you,

'light of the world,' " says he, with emphasis. Voltaire exclaims, " Madame Denis, bring the snuffers." After the hour of glory comes the hour for business. The farmers, the borrowers, the tenants of Ferney, an entire world supported by Voltaire arrive. He calls for coffee, more coffee, always coffee. He shows himself in turn easy and severe, he receives some as the father of a family, others as the lord of a village. He walks again in the park, sometimes with a gardening tool in his hand, sometimes with a flower, never with a book. The news from Paris arrives to astonish him; he could do without coffee if he could recover all his energies. He enters in agitation, writes twenty letters in less than an hour, his hasty pen saving itself by its wit from its impudence. In the evening the guests of the château, Marmon-
tel, La Harpe, or Florian, come to make their court to the patriarch, in company with some ladies or actresses.

Meantime Voltaire was some eighty-four years old. For twenty years he had lived at Ferney without thinking much about further travel. His tomb, a simple stone, was placed near the church which he had built. All his friends had come again and again to bid him adieu; he awaited death firmly like all those who have done good and evil here below, when Madame Denis, tired of so long a stay at Ferney, made every exertion to compass a visit to Paris. He decided to set out; arrived at Paris.

February 10, 1778, and alighted at the mansion of the marquis de Villette, quai des Théatins, now quai Voltaire. Each day that he passed at Paris was marked by a new triumph. The academies came in a body to offer him their homage; with the exception of the courtiers and the priests, all that was illustrious in Paris came to ask audience of the patriarch of Ferney. Bernardin de St. Pierre relates that he heard porters at the corners of the streets asking one another about the health of Voltaire.

On Monday, March 30, 1778, a triumph more splendid than monarch or hero ever obtained, greeted Voltaire after more than half a century of glory and of persecution. For the first time since his return to Paris he went to the Academy and the theatre. The homage of the Academy was but the prelude to the triumph of the theatre. All Paris was on his footsteps; a cry of universal joy, acclamations, clapping of hands, burst forth from all sides during his progress. Grimm is so intoxicated with his triumph that he becomes eloquent over it. "When this honored old man was seen, so weighed down with years and glory, when he was seen to dismount, supported by the arms of two friends, sympathy and admiration reached their highest point. The crowd pressed on one another to reach him, they pressed still more to defend him against themselves." Scarcely had the carriage stopped, when the horses and wheels were covered with people. The actors were to play *Irene*.

Voltaire sat near the stage, in the box of the gentlemen of the chamber, between his niece and the marquise de Villette. As soon as he appeared, the actor Brisart appeared, bearing a crown of laurel, which he requested madame de Villette to place on the brow of this illustrious man. The spectators applauded with cries of joy. Voltaire immediately removed the crown, the spectators begged him to retain it. There were many more people in the lobbies than in the boxes; all the women stood up, a large number of them having descended to the parterre, not having been able to find better places elsewhere. It was more than enthusiasm, it was adoration, in fact worship. The piece was commenced; it was played badly; in spite of the actors and the piece, never was piece more applauded. Voltaire rose to salute the public. At the same instant, a bust of the poet appeared on a pedestal in the middle of the stage. All the actors and actresses heaped garlands and crowns around it. "At this sublime and touching spectacle," exclaims Grimm, "who would not have thought himself in the midst of Rome or Athens? The name of Voltaire resounded from all parts with acclamation, transports, cries of joy and gratitude. Envy and hatred, fanaticism and intolerance, dared only to blush in secret; and perhaps, for the first time, public opinion in France was seen to take possession of its full authority." While the performers heaped the bust with crowns and

garlands, Madame Vestris advanced to the front of the stage to address to the divinity of the fête the verses improvised by the marquis of Saint Marc. *Nanine* was played after this, the bust remaining on the stage. On leaving the theatre, Voltaire, overpowered by his laurels, breathing only by the consciousness of his glory, thought himself at last relieved from his honors ; but all was not finished ; the ladies almost bore him in their arms to his carriage. He wished to get in, they still restrained him. "Torches, torches, so that everybody may see him." At last, seated in his carriage, he must give up his hand to be kissed ; people clung to the doors, they mounted on the wheels though the vehicle was in motion ; the crowd, more and more intoxicated with enthusiasm, made the air resound with his name. The people, who also shared in the fête, for the people love men who are persecuted for their genius, cried with transport, "Vive Voltaire ! He has been exiled fifty years for driving away the Jesuits ! Vive Voltaire !" At the door of his residence, Voltaire turned, stretched out his hands, wept, and exclaimed in a broken voice, "Must you suffocate me with roses ?"

The hour of death had however struck. He had other triumphs before his death. Franklin, who had adorned the ranks of philosophy, and delivered the New World from the yoke of Europe, wished to see the poet who had charmed, diverted, and delivered the Old from the yoke of prejudice. The American

philosopher presented his grandson to him, requesting his benediction for him. "*God and Liberty*," said he to him—the only benediction befitting the grandson of Franklin. They saw one another again at the Academy of Sciences; they embraced amid loud acclamations; some one said it was Solon embracing Sophocles.

At the time of his death he led the most agitated and laborious life; not only did he work, discuss, and give audience from morning till night, but when night came he lighted his lamp for further exertions. The literary and grammatical revolution which he wished to effect in the dictionary of the Academy is known. By having his mind continually awake, he was no longer able to sleep; he took opium, made a mistake in the dose, and fell into the half-sleep of death. Thus the two most illustrious men of the eighteenth century, Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, died by poison.

The history of the death of Voltaire is covered by a cloud, through which the truth but feebly appears. A curé, who had converted the abbé de Latteignant, an abbé without faith, and a poet without poetry, was desirous of also converting Voltaire; he wrote to him to ask an interview. Voltaire granted it, and said to him: "I shall say to you the same thing which I said in giving my benediction to the grandson of the wise and illustrious Franklin—'God and Liberty!' I am eighty-four years old; I am soon to appear be-

fore God, the creator of all worlds. It is what I shall still say." — "Ah, monsieur," said the curé, "how well recompensed should I consider myself if you should become my conquest! This merciful God does not desire your loss; turn to him, since he turns to you." — "But I tell you that I love God," answered Voltaire. "That is much," answered the curé; "but it is necessary to give the proofs thereof, for an inactive love can never be the true love of God, which is active." The curé departed, he returned and obtained a very Christian profession of faith from the dying man; but the curé of Saint Sulpice lost all by wishing to have all. Jealous of being anticipated by another, he demanded a disavowal of all doctrines contrary to the faith. Voltaire, wearied, asked for a little repose in which to die. The curé of Saint Sulpice did not give up, braving the railleries of D'Alembert, Diderot, Condorcet, all the philosophers, who encouraged Voltaire to die as a sage, he continued to his last day to cry in his ear, "Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ?" According to Condorcet Voltaire replied, as weary of the contest, "In God's name, monsieur, do not talk any more about that man." I do not believe that he uttered this sacrilegious antithesis; or if he did say it, he had no longer his reason, as the curé affirms. I more incline to believe this simple answer reported by other contemporaries, "Let me die in peace."

He died three hours afterward. His death was as

disturbed as his life had been, and repose had not even then arrived for him. Paris rejected his body. They wished once again to exile him whom they had so often exiled. Voltaire had prepared for himself a simple tomb in the cemetery at Ferney ; in the soil where he had grown old and done good ; they would not even let him have this scrap of earth which was his own. It was decided that he who had built the church had no right of citizenship in its graveyard. The abbé Mignot, his nephew, carried off the body of the poet in all haste to the monastery of which he was the head. The bishop of Troyes, however, indignant that such a man should lie in the holy land of his diocese, sent to forbid his interment. It was too late ; Voltaire was sealed beneath one of the chapels ; the prior was, however, turned out.

Voltaire has been avenged by all the reasonable men of his times. Ferney still attracts philosophic pilgrims. The king of Prussia ordered a solemn service in the catholic church of Berlin, where the whole of his academy appeared ; and at the head of his army, while defending the rights of the princes of the empire, wrote the eulogy of his friend the poet. The empress of Russia also wrote the eulogy of Voltaire. A great lady, the marquise de Boufflers, who was not a poet, became one to sing the praises of Voltaire.

“ God knows well what he does, La Fontaine has observed
But had I created a being so grand,

Voltaire had his wit and his talents preserved,
I ne'er could destroy, the great work of my hand.

"The man whom all Greece would have joined to extol,
Whom Augustus himself would have made his delight,
By the kings of to-day, has been spurned from their sight,
And De Beaumont refuses a mass for his soul.

"Saint-Sulpice, you are right; why commit to the dust
A being exempt from mortality's doom?
To that genius divine it were surely unjust,
To refuse him an altar, though we well may a tomb."

Voltaire returned again to Paris for the last time. Twelve years after his death the Pantheon opened her doors to him triumphantly. At this hour Jean-Jacques Rousseau and François Marie Arouet de Voltaire; he who consoled in his sadness, and he who saddened in his gayety; he who bore proudly his poverty, and he who bore nobly his wealth; he who sought divine truth with the solitary lamp, and he who sought the sovereign reason with his hand full of firebrands—these two men who saved the eighteenth century by their greatness, and who lived as enemies—these two rash philosophers, who dared to interrogate Heaven without falling on their knees, repose beneath the same vault, reunited by the hand of God!

If you wish to find Voltaire elsewhere than in his books, do not go to Ferney. He was its soul, its fortune, its grandeur. At the present day Ferney is a ruin without majesty, a commonplace ruin, which does not retain a single memento of Voltaire. Do

not go to the Pantheon, a sepulchre without grandeur, where the explanatory words of a prattling guide disturb the solemn silence of the illustrious dead. If he is there for God, he is not there for the visitors. He is at Versailles, the true Pantheon of France, painted by Largillière, in all his passionate youth and all his sarcastic humor. It is there you should go. A portrait is more eloquent than a tomb.

Some have said that Voltaire sinned against friendship; they have forgotten to say that friendship had sinned against him. Do not talk to me of those chance friends he had elbowed at the courts of France, the court of Prussia, or the court of Stanislaus. Friendship knows neither ranks nor titles. She is born in our youthful days, in the days of illusions. The heart is always young only in the recollection of those whom it has loved in youth. Look at Voltaire before the friends of his twentieth year; is he guilty of breach of friendship with the marshal de Richelieu, Cideville, Helvétius, Thiriot, Formont, d'Argental? does he not in writing to these, exclaim on every page, "My heart does not grow old"? How many charming letters in prose and verse! And how prodigal he is of wit and gayety for his friend Cideville. Those pretty stanzas are not forgotten on the counsellor's pulpit, "*Ah! date from Manon's bosom—But you kiss your desk.*" And this letter, which is that of a sage, a poet, and what is worth more, of a friend: "It would be pleasanter to talk to one another, than to

write to one another; but destiny is always putting off the happy time, when Paris is to unite us. We will live there one day, but I shall come there an old man. The heart does not grow old, as I well feel, but it is hard for the immortals to find themselves dwellers in ruins. I was thinking not long ago of this decay, which makes itself felt from day to day, and see how I spoke of it :—

“If you would have me love again,
Again the years of love restore,
And to Life's twilight nearly o'er,
Its dawn, if in your power, enchain.”

But everybody knows by heart these pretty stanzas, which have undergone a thousand transformations by our modern poets. Do we not find in them the sentiment we pride ourselves on in our day? Do we not find besides all the wisdom of the ancients, thus :—

“ Without the spirit of his age
He still has all its grief and pain.

“ To brighter youth it's pleasures leave,
Its joys and transports ever new;
And since life's moments are but two,
Let us then one to wisdom give.

“ What! have ye then for ever flown,
Folly— Illusion— Tenderness—
Ye heavenly gifts whose charm alone,
Stripped life of half its bitterness !

“ We must die twice, too well I see;
To cease to love, and to be loved,
A death more bitter far has proved,
Than merely ceasing once to be.”

He says afterward, that friendship comes to him to console him :—

“ Yes, I pursued her, but I wept,
Because I could pursue but her.”

Arm yourselves again against the dryness of heart of the man, who thus wears mourning for his youth.

Voltaire has been accused of being a miser. Voltaire did not throw money out of the window, because he knew well, that money is the best travelling companion through life. He early felt that to be strong in this world, one must be rich ; fortune was therefore one of the divinities of his youth — although a poet, he amassed millions. The miser hoards his treasure to clasp it with his hands in voluptuous frenzy : Voltaire spent his money with the wisdom, perhaps too cautious, of the father of a family, which did not prevent him as soon as he was forty, from using the capital with the interest. Is not Ferney, that colony which was so flourishing under his reign, if I may so call it, is it not a proof that Voltaire made a noble use of his fortune ?

In order to judge a man properly, we must after having seen him from a distance, go up to him, evoke, as Bacon said, the genius of his times, make one's self for an hour a man of his times. After all the metamorphoses evoked by Voltaire, which have intervened in the France of ideas, the arms of this terrible combatant appear to us weak or blunt, to us, the dreamers of another century ; but if by enchant

ment we were to awake under the reign of Louis XV., how much we should be astounded at the heroic temerity of this man, who was for a long time the only one of his party. In fact, what was the France of Louis XV., the France of ideas, the head of the nation? In the fine days of antiquity, the thinker had only to say to his thought, "Go, thy day is come." But in the year of grace, 1750, three centuries after the discovery of printing, the thought of the philosopher met at every step a sentinel, who said "You can not pass." The book did not fly like a bird, from the window of the thinker; it was first, before anything else, submitted to the censor, to the exempt, to the whim of the minister, the criticism of the confessor, the fancy of the mistress, the minister not speaking until after the mistress and the confessor. Yes, in 1750, in the face of Voltaire there was a royal censor who wrote gravely, upon the works of Homer and of Corneille, "I have read this book, by order of monseigneur, the keeper of the seals, and I have not found anything, which, it appears to me, should prevent its publication." And the royal censor had to render an account of his acts only to monseigneur the keeper of the seals, who did everything by the grace of God. It is too well known, that Voltaire and Jean-Jacques, D'Alembert and Diderot, had not, like Homer and Corneille, the approbation and privilege of the king. If Voltaire shook out illumination from his hands, it was out of France, in the swamps of

Holland, the fogs of England, the wilderness of Switzerland. If the censor once let a work of Voltaire's pass, this work was entitled *The Princess of Navarre*, or *The Poem of Fontenoy*! But if Voltaire dared to think, stop! They commenced by the Bastile, they continued by exile, they would have ended by a dungeon. Meanwhile, Voltaire, a gentleman to the king of France, a friend of the king of Prussia, and of the empress of Russia, assumed pseudonyms in order to speak the truth. It was only a jest, you will say a hundred years after, as you smile over the follies of Louis XV. It was so little of a jest, that it was only by a surprise that Voltaire when dead, obtained a tomb in his native land. The finest conquest of Voltaire's genius, is that of the liberty of thought; the light, at the breath of the philosopher, has consumed the bushel. At the present day, whatever may be done, the dawn has broken, and as Lord Chesterfield said to Montesquieu: "The will of your ministers may still erect barricades, but they will never become barriers."

V.

THE universality of his genius has been made an accusation against Voltaire. In reference to this, we may mention a scene which took place one evening, at the residence of Duclos. A choice and elegant company were assembled; Voltaire was mentioned,

all vied in extolling his encyclopedian genius "What a pity," soon remarked a jurisconsult, "that he should have undertaken to talk about law."—"For my part," said a geometrician, "I can pass over everything else, but he should not have discussed geometry."—"You will, however, admit," said an historian, "that he made out badly in history."—A poet rose to proclaim his opinion.—"Silence!" said Duclos to him, "it is not your turn to speak." Duclos might have added: "You, M. the jurisconsult, and you M. the geometrician, do not condemn Voltaire for having given a charm to the driest studies, despise not the dazzling light of this boundless intellect. Voltaire had a fault which formed a part of his glory: he had the eye of an eagle, he saw everything, embraced everything, illuminated everything; he contented himself with spreading his luminous intellect over the surface, leaving the depths to more patient explorers. You, M. the historian, do not disdain a man who has often given life to history; who has not been false, unless, like the gifted painter, in order to give a greater force and a greater charm to the truth. Do you, M. the poet, bow yourself before a poet, who has said what he wished to say.

Nature, who embalms the works of Jean-Jacques, does not show even an end of her robe in those of Voltaire, it was the academic nature of Boileau, which inspired the poet of the *Henriades*: the waters,

trees, flowers, mountains, valleys, hamlets, were the only words which Voltaire condescended to use. Even in his epistle on agriculture, we can seldom find verses like these:—

“The tree our hand has planted and uprears,
 Lovelier to us than all Versailles appears.
 In Paris' walls the Norman Fontenelle
 Lent new attractions to the rural reed;
 He praised the life he would have feared to lead,
 And turned his rustics, into beau and belle.
 I would the heart should speak or be the author mute.”

The rest of the epistle does not contain a single word of reference to nature. When one can so well judge others, why does not one judge one's self? In the whole of the *Henriade*, there is nothing more to be seen of nature. “There is not,” said Delille, “pasture to feed the horses, nor stream to give them drink.” In the sixteenth century, nature gave inspiration to poets. Boileau appeared, and put upon her head the solemn periwig of the court of Louis XIV.; thus, in his epistle to his gardener—what did I say, gardener?—*Antoine, governor of my garden of Auteuil*, Antoine directs the yews, and exercises on the hedge the art of *La Quintinie*. Hereupon is a note by the poet, to explain this hemistich: Jean de La Quintinie, director of the fruit orchards and vegetable gardens of the king. Another note has already warned the reader, that Boileau would not have condescended to speak of his gardener, if Horace had not sung of his farmer. As Boileau was listened to by the poets of

his time, poetry in the seventeenth century, despised the striped petticoat of the hamlets and the cowslip; of the meadows, the cascades of the brooks and the harmonies of the forests, the reveries of the path and the view from the mountain. It was decided that the garden of Versailles was alone worthy, thanks to its yew-trees and its statues, of being sung in heroic verse. La Fontaine alone, whom nobody listened to, ventured to sing of the curling smoke of the farmhouse, and the dew of the wayside. Unfortunately, Voltaire was of the school of Boileau.

Voltaire judged rapidly and judged well; he often paints, with a single word, a man and his works; *Gentil-Bernard*, the *abbé Greluchon*, *Babet the flower-girl*, *Floriannet*, here are four poets criticised. What is more original or more true than his remark to Marivaux: "He is a man who knows all the paths which run in the direction of the human heart, but does not know the straight highway." No one better than he could throw off an epigram. "*Œdipus*," exclaimed La Motte, "is the finest subject in the world, I must put it in prose."—"Do so," said Voltaire, "and I will put your *Ines* in verse." Speaking of Marmontel and his *Poétique*: "Like Moses, he conducts others to the promised land, though he is not permitted to enter it himself." He amused himself good-naturedly with the opinions of the world. One day, at the Prince of Conti's, the company were tearing to pieces with some justice, the

ables of La Motte, while praising those of La Fontaine. "By the way," said Voltaire, "I know a fable by La Fontaine, which has never been printed." "How! a fable of La Fontaine! pray make haste and tell it to us." And, Voltaire having done so, "That is capital, it is not like those wretched things of La Motte's; how natural, how graceful!"—"Well, gentlemen," exclaimed Voltaire, "this charming fable which you all admire, is for all that La Motte's."

Voltaire is almost abandoned by the stage, because, more faithful to the ideas of his age, than to the eternal idea of grandeur and beauty, he made every one of his tragedies a weapon with which to combat prejudices which have passed away.

This man who could so well laugh in his tales, is almost morose in his comedies. It is because a comedy is a work of patience and reflection; because in the drama, the most dazzling wit, is wit thrown away, if it does not serve to paint characters and passions. Was Voltaire aware that Comedy is a serious and deep-thinking muse, who assumes the mask of folly, only the better to tell the spectator the truth?

It is in his tales that Voltaire is especially to be sought: it is there that his genius expands in full liberty; it is there that he surprises us by his profound gayety and his masterly wisdom; it is there that under a merry mask, he flings truth at us by handfuls; it is Rabelais, it is Montaigne, it is Voltaire.

He is to be found not only in these stories, he per-
VOL. I.—5

vades all his works ; his sketches even indicate the powerful hand of a great master ; the poorest of his pamphlets is still worthy of our study. In the days of that carnival, which lasted so long in the eighteenth century, he masked himself like the rest, but he knew how to make himself known through the mask.

It is in his tales in verse and prose, that the style of Voltaire appears in all its force. At the present day, when the French language has become a labyrinth, in which the thought does not always hold on to the thread of Ariadne, this style of Voltaire's strikes and attracts us like a fine ray of light. Nothing is more frank, nothing more simple, nothing more beautiful ; never have wit and reason travelled better in company. Nothing is wanting, unless it is the grandeur which results from sentiment ; but God has reserved to himself, the right of making a perfect work.

Yes, the style of Voltaire's tales is the true French style. It is Voltaire's own. In these the poet has imitated none of his predecessors ; he has dared to listen to himself. Unfortunately, in his tragedies, tradition spoiled almost everything. After Corneille and Racine, how is one to make a good tragedy which shall not be indebted to the works of these two masters ? And then, if one is a man of genius, why make one ?

The word which would most nearly comprise the genius of Voltaire, would be reason. All his works

attest this, whether prose or verse, poem or pamphlet, tragedy or tale. This pitiless reason has suppressed from us, many of those charming pages on which his wit would have so brilliantly gilded the arabesque vagaries of his fancy. Yes, reason, this pure spring which springs forth in France, this clear cascade at which Rabelais, Montaigne, Molière, and La Fontaine, have slaked their thirst; this exquisite, elevated reason, which forms the entire genius of the French nation. Is not this reason the feeling of the beautiful and the good? is it not the horn of abundance whence fall all the fruits of genius? Is it with aught else that Voltaire has produced literary masterpieces and shaken humanity? Was it not with this, that he vanquished the false philosophers and the false devotees?

In the work of Voltaire, Reason displays herself at every step, like an enlightening and animating soul. There is a poet who sings, but there is also a man who wishes to be right. It is not enough to speak the language of the gods, he would also speak the language of his brethren. Thus with this flaming sword, which he calls reason, does he traverse literature, politics, philosophy, and religion, scattering light and combating error. Look around you at the consequences everywhere, often good, sometimes fatal; but who, here below, can flatter himself that he is not sowing tares with the good grain?

In poetry, in the poetry of Voltaire himself, reason

is often in the wrong, for reason proscribes enthusiasm and temerity. Now, is there any great poet without these two majestic failings? Poetry is, before everything else, a dream, so poets dream! Voltaire has just been able to save himself, and then only by his wit, but in the tale, the epistle and the satire. In these it is wit which speaks in all its grace, its fire, its attractiveness. Sometimes Fancy ventures with light step into Voltaire's domain, she sings there the *You* and the *Thou* with all her charm. But almost always in this sparkling verse, wit alone speaks.

If Reason is in a wrong place in the lofty verse of Voltaire, in the poetry which soars on the wings of reverie and enthusiasm, she soon resumes her place in the poetry which argues as it rhymes, in the poetry which speaks to the ideas while it addresses the sentiment. Thus is it not reason which predominates in these tragedies, these stories, these epistles in which Voltaire incessantly attacks prejudices, and is in quest of truth?

Follow step by step this reason, through all its fertile paths: in politics it produces the love of country, and the love of liberty; it raises man to his proper height, it proscribes the last traces of feudality, it glories in the nobilities of heart and mind, it says to the peasant at the plough: to cultivate the earth with love, is to ennoble one's self by labor.

In philosophy, the reason of Voltaire has created

criticism ; it has seized boldly, with a pitiless hand on the ridiculous side of all the philosophies which have strutted here below in robes of velvet or in rags.

In religion, the reason of Voltaire becomes excited ; but is it not still the reason ? If he went too far, it was because he saw that he would lose ground. Did he not write to D'Alembert ? "Time will make men distinguish what we thought, from what we said ?" If he struck violently against the church, it certainly was not to attack the Deity ; it was to crush the priest, the impure priest of the eighteenth century, who, on the avowal of a cardinal, crept up in the shadow of the altar, in order to scale soon, not the kingdom of heaven, but the kingdom of earth. In this matter, Voltaire experienced the same misfortune as Diomedes, who, before Troy, fancying he was pursuing an enemy, wounded a divinity.

Voltaire is no longer read, he is neglected ; his enemies explain him according to their own taste as certain priests explain the Scriptures. He is taken at his word, in some letter or satire which escaped him in the anger of the moment ; he is condemned in consequence of some contradiction suggested by him some day, of bad faith. Voltaire was before everything else a poet ; he believed in his verses ; he did not foresee, that after his death, his polemics in prose would be reprinted. Not a letter, not even one of confession, has been overlooked. Can a man be

judged by letters written without reflection, as fast as an impatient pen could move? If Voltaire is judged by his serious poems, it will be seen that he was not so bad a Christian. What in reality does he say to and cause our Savior to say, whom he calls *the man-God, the divine enemy of the scribes and priests?* "He who knew all —

"Has deigned to tell us all in telling us to love."

Does not he whom you call atheist, talk as well as you do yourself? In the *Discourse on Virtue*, is not Jesus represented in all his humble grandeur and all his glorious simplicity?

How does this atheist who venerated the Savior, address the Deity in his last days?

"To what conclusion can we come but this,
'That the fool's reason springs from prejudice?
For them we should not with ourselves contend;
Error is earth-born, Truth from Heaven descends.

"O God unknown! O God proclaimed by all!
Hear the last words that from my mouth shall fall —
'Tis in thy law I err, if err I do;
My heart may wander, but to thee 'tis true."

Do not these verses appear to be a cry from the heart? Yes, in spite of all the errors and passions from which even genius is not exempt in this world of errors and passions, Voltaire has played his part in this great religion of feeling which Christ brought to men.

Yes, in his silent hours, when his thoughts led him

far from the noise of the world, and tore from him his pride, in his sincere hours, when disentangled from party strife, he raised his eyes to heaven after having visited humanity, Voltaire was a Christian; do not misconstrue my meaning, he was not a Christian in the church, but he was a Christian under the open sky, before God, in the splendid temple of Nature, a Christian like Jean-Jacques, without like him attaching sublime dreams to reason. Genius always rises high enough to comprehend, that the works of Christ were the words of God.

Many a religious writer of our time who condemns Voltaire, would perhaps have been a Christian like him in the eighteenth century. Like Voltaire, he would have labored to remove all the tinsel gewgaws which concealed the altar, he would with a bold hand have torn away some of the veils from truth.

You talk of the sterility of the man who tore down, not to build up again; he has himself answered this attack: "I demolish prejudices, what would you have had me put in their place?" It must be said, that in his passion, he was something like the bear in the fable. To kill a fly he sometimes threw a stone.

Was it not in order to make truth shine forth resplendent, that God created in the same century, two great men who contrast so brilliantly with one another, one to open and one to close it — Voltaire, De Maistre? Do we not incessantly see one or the

other in the ardor of truth armed, one with an axe or a club, the other with the sword of a gentleman, or brand of an archangel, ever ready to take or replace by assault?

Philosophy, said the church, is the science of death; it is the science of life, exclaimed Voltaire. The church bent the human countenance toward the tomb, Voltaire raised his brow toward heaven. Pride you will say; Reason, he will answer. Before Voltaire, philosophy was the angel of good and evil; in his great work, the devil's claw always displays itself with the finger of God; these were but light in darkness, clouds amid rays of light. Philosophy is the fruit of genius; a cherished yet bitter fruit which God reserves to those who rise high enough to taste of the tree of knowledge. Christ was God, but was he not also a philosopher? Christ died for having preached to us divine and human truths, how many others have died for us in preaching wisdom. Every philosopher has in some sort borne the cross in this world: Socrates, you have drunk the hemlock; Galileo, you have walked on your knees; Pascal, you died from philosophy as others die from love; you, Voltaire, were insulted even in death!

Philosophers are noble spirits who penetrate boldly from the unknown to the unknown. They attempt to read a book of which they possess neither the beginning nor the end. They succeed in reading, but do they also in comprehending? However, not

knowing the language which they speak, scarcely have they stammered out the first word, than they venture to pronounce the last. Is not this the last word of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, *Love the work of the Creator* or *love the Creator in his work*, while awaiting the funeral blast of death, which will extinguish the torch or reillumine it with purer flames—Doubt or Pantheism.

Voltaire said at the same time, *I love the Creator in his work*, and *I love the Creator and his work*. He said one or the other, sometimes listening to Spinoza, sometimes to himself. It would be a great wrong to wish to subtilize with his mind, it is too French to furnish matter for a page of German metaphysics; however, in studying Voltaire in his philosophy, we pass from contradiction to contradiction. He lived somewhat out of the way of philosophic ideas, without troubling himself much about anything not visible to the mind. But he was king of literature, he was crowned king of philosophy, of Pantheistical philosophy, he the eclectic philosopher. He accepted this royalty in jest, he ended by taking it seriously, judging that he was predestined always to walk in the front rank. I fancy, however, that he laughed a little behind the scenes, for, at a later time, he hoped to become a cardinal, had himself made a capuchin, would have accepted the papacy. Having become a philosopher, he was constrained like the rest to walk in the dark, to contradict himself, to

wander astray, though he threw fireballs in plenty as he passed along.

The greatest enemy of Voltaire, has been his school which has grossly deceived itself. The master had reason, with the sentiment of the beautiful and the good, if not complete, at least elevated enough, to vivify and ennoble reason. But the ignorant school possessed reason without the sentiment of the beautiful and the good, this gross good sense has become in the hands of the disciples only a dangerous weapon, a tree without fruit, a sterile field. One has picked up his abandoned classic gown: here less than ever is it the dress which makes the monk; there is no use to dress up in the rags of Voltaire, no one will be deceived; I do not speak of simpletons who let themselves be taken in by the outside. Another, only half understanding, far from realizing, his ideas in politics, has fallen into absurdity while daring to call himself a Voltairian. Another, but half comprehending, in lieu of confining himself in philosophy to a wise criticism, has ended in a sterile skepticism: it would be needful to mention too many here; some, far from separating religion from superstition, have confounded them in a common blasphemy: are such worthy to be named?

But the hour has come, to contemplate Voltaire in his glorious solitude. Push aside all these disciples who cast a shadow about him. Do not listen to what the pedants preach in his name; listen to the man

himself, to him who said, like Pascal, that true eloquence laughs at eloquence, read and reread his books, for how many of his lines are axioms ! let us follow the bee to the hive, without disturbing ourselves about the wasps buzzing about him. Let us not be afraid of his wrath, it often bursts out like a thunder-clap of truth. Why should he not be violently enraged against all the follies which he hears so vaunted ! Let us follow him, let us follow him ! All the paths through which he has passed, are not pleasant paths, but how few minds would refuse to pass through them. Was it not he who was the first in France to visit Prometheus, he who broke the first chain, who placed himself between the victim and the vulture ?

Genius has its fatality. Must we not see in its works a manifestation of the will of Providence ? Voltaire, this great mower of prejudices, had cut down all the ill weeds which covered the soil of France. His reason like a burning sun, had shed its rays everywhere, it was the sunlight which precedes the storm. The storm did not burst until after the death of its precursor. The French revolution was the posthumous work of Voltaire. There is an epic poem which all the great poets would gladly sign. Let us salute the work, salute the workman. The revolution has done better than offer us liberty, it has given us the sentiment of high aspiration, it has brought us nearer to the divinity. A second time

Christ issued from the sepulchre, with the grand poetry of his symbols, to spread abroad charity to console the world by love. We were no longer catholics, we have become Christians, the word of God has resounded in our souls, the tears and the blood of Christ have caused hope to bloom again in our hearts. The church had shown us a narrow path to heaven, have we not found the highway?

VOLTAIRE AND M^{LLE}. DE LIVRY.

THE DEVIL'S TEARS.

I.

PREFACE.

It was a hundred-and-one years ago.

Monsieur de Voltaire one morning had taken by surprise, the marchioness de Boufflers, all in tears beneath the old elms of her château, where she had gone with the marquis and the marchioness of Châtelet.

"Ah, the tears of a Magdalen," said he to madame de Boufflers, with his usual impertinence.

"I will not answer you," the marchioness replied, without getting angry, for Voltaire was allowed to say what he pleased—"I will not answer you, for you have never been in love."

Voltaire made a pirouette and exclaimed: "Never loved! Marchioness, this is not mere impertinence,

but injustice; whoever has reached twenty years, beneath the sun, has loved; it is only the devil of whom Saint Theresa could say: 'The miserable being, he has never felt his heart beat!'

"I know that," replied madame de Boufflers, wiping her beautiful eyes with a rose freshly plucked, "but shall I, monsieur de Voltaire, intrust you with a secret?"

Voltaire approached the marchioness, smiling—"The secret," continued she, "is that you are the devil!"

"I am aware," replied Voltaire, without allowing himself to be disturbed on the score of the secret, "that all men like me, have a devil as they say; the devil is wit, is genius, is madness, if you will; but believe me, madame, that the more we have of the devil, the more we have of God. The god—who can deny it?—is love. As for myself, I have loved four times with passion. Don't you then know my adventures? Did I not disguise myself as a nun, an abbé, a guardsman, in order to deceive the sentinels?"

"Yes, you were in love with Pimpette, madame de Rupelmonde, mademoiselle de Livry, and the marchioness du Châtelet."

"You forget the maréchale de Villars," said Voltaire, placing his hand on his heart.

"Yes, you have loved; but your love has been the love of the *salon*, without storms and without

tears, like that of Pont-de-Vesle and madame du Deffant.”*

Voltaire started like a deer.

“Without storms! without tears!” said he an-

*From an excellent criticism by Monsieur Eugène Pelletan, on the *Men and Women of the Eighteenth Century*, I extract the following page; and I may here remark, that I take what is good wherever I find it:—

“What strange contradictions love seems always to heap around him! It is a very old remark, that those beings made to love each other, and to be united together, are always, by mysterious and instinctive ways, seeking each other over mountains, across the plains, over seas, from horizon to horizon. The contrary would appear to be more true. Those beings made to unite themselves in a common sympathy, to guard their fidelity like myrrh in a golden vase, appear in this world only to be avoiding each other; as soon as they meet, each one flies to his own pole. When the gods visited the earth, they found two old folks in love with each other; but I never heard that they found any young ones.

“When we see two beings truly united, a long time united, do not let us hasten to the conclusion that love has been and remains with them. If it were possible to unmask that hypocrisy of the heart which has never confessed to itself its self-interested deceptions, we would obtain such revelations as would render impossible, or false, three fourths of the romances which are published: and instead of making love interfering everywhere, instead of finding it everywhere—of lavishing it everywhere—we would see that it is an animal as rare, if not as fabulous, as the unicorn. Listen to the following story relative to this subject:—

“The whole eighteenth century for a long time admired, exalted, the constancy of Pont-de-Vesle for Madame du Deffant. In fact, they passed fifty years together, in the most delightful and perfect intimacy, to the great scandal of the manners of the day, which could not appreciate an attachment so deeply rooted. There was never a cloud in that clear sky, never a quarrel, never a moment of cessation in their love. The little abbé, the philosophers of the Encyclopedia, and the lords of the court, were so completely vanquished by it, that they ceased to laugh at it. The honest man, Du Deffant, let it all pass with a resignation that was truly touching:

grily; "without storms! you are not aware then that madame du Châtelet and myself never passed a week together without quarrelling? Ah! I have no passion! You will persist in saying that I am

he studied philosophy, he read Bayle's dictionary; but he forgot the division of the page, and read directly across, which made him find the writer admirable, but somewhat too deep. Finally, after fifty years of small attentions, sighs, protestations, oaths, trials, pledges of all sorts, assiduities, devotion, Pont-du-Vesle and madame du Deffant found themselves alone one day in the chamber of the latter. The witnesses of this marvellous constancy and undiscoverable happiness were dead. Madame du Deffant, blind, was seated at a distance, within an inner room, in an old worn-out arm-chair: Pont-de-Vesle was reclining on a couch near the fireside. 'Pont-de-Vesle where are you?' exclaimed madame du Deffant, in a dying voice. 'In the corner of your chimney, with my feet upon the andirons, quite at home.'—'It can not be denied there are very few *liaisons* of as old a standing as ours.'—'It is fifty years.'—'Yes, fifty years past.'—'And during this long interval. . . .'—'Not a single rupture.'—'That is what I have always admired.'—'But, Pont-de-Vesle, has that not been from the fact of our being at the bottom very indifferent to each other?'—'It may well be so, madame.'

"Thus, these two lovers, who had passed fifty years in these love-deceits, within a month, a day, an hour perhaps before death, when weak and impotent, confessed that they had never loved each other!

"I beg you, fair and gentle reader, not to understand me too literally, and not to think me dogmatically skeptic on the subject of love. True love is, in my opinion, an ideal perfection, to which we should doubtless tend, and to which we will arrive, more or less, according to our merits. Ladies, let us confess to each other; to a poor devil, who has passed his day of error, the confession will be without risk. Love is not, is it, that which the poets—those liars who lie in the name of Heaven—describe as a thing absolute, eternal, and exclusive! Love in the life of a woman is a centre, which a thousand other loves enlarge, without injury, by their tributaries. We need not say, that women have their preferences: but that does not prevent them from listening, with a secret emotion, to the rattling of certain spurs upon the pavement, or to the romances sung in the moonlight at their windows, while the summer breeze diffusee

without passion! Only three days ago, if that good monsieur du Châtelet had not in person put a stop to it, we would have scratched out each other's eyes."

"I believe, indeed, in your frenzy," said the marchioness, with a mocking manner. "But why do you quarrel? that is not the way with true lovers, who are jealous or in despair; you quarrel, perhaps, because you can not agree upon some point in metaphysics."

Voltaire burst into a laugh.

"It is true," said he resuming his gay, malicious look. "I did not think of that." "But," resumed he all of a sudden, "if you have no faith in my tempests of love, you will believe at least in my tears. I have never dropped a tear upon the beautiful brown hair of Pimpette, but how I have wept for mademoiselle de Livry! Ah! marchioness, if you knew how I loved her! It was the second love, the most terrible, the most charming."

the warm aroma of the vervains—or even from examining, with a curiosity which is not without its charms, the elegant grace of the young dancers: and I am not here speaking of actors—of famous performers and opera-singers—of all those from whom, after the excitement of a *soirée*, there is borne some reminder, to last throughout the night, and to be dreamed of a long time after.

"It is this inconstancy and these contradictions of love which the author of the *Men and Women of the Eighteenth Century* has transferred," &c.

II.

HOW ONE BECOMES AN ACTRESS.

I WAS twenty-four, I was already celebrated, I had forgotten Pimpette with the actresses of the theatre, and the actresses of the world. I believed neither in God nor the devil, I supped to my full, every day of my life, without troubling myself about the sun's rising next morning. I wallowed like a hog in the philosophical mire of my god-father, the abbé de Châteauneuf. Ninon de l'Enclos, in bequeathing me her library, had only bequeathed me some bad books : such were my articles of faith.

One day that I had nothing to do, a young girl presented herself before me. She was so beautiful, that I arose before her, like a point of admiration. She was clothed for charity's sake, in a dress of beautiful material, but long since faded. The poor girl did not know what to say to me, and I did not know how to answer her. I begged her to be seated ; she preferred to remain standing.

" Monsieur de Voltaire, I have come to you . . . She was pale and faltering with weakness ; I took her in my arms, and pressed her to my heart. She withdrew herself from me without getting angry, and finally addressed me.

" Monsieur de Voltaire, my destiny is the stage, it is my last resource, for I have neither father nor

mother; but before making my debut, it is necessary for me to take some lessons. You are acquainted with Mademoiselle Lecouvreur."

I interrupted the young girl.

"Mademoiselle Lecouvreur, like all great actresses, only took lessons of her heart. However, if you wish it, I will take you to her. But what will she teach you? She will teach you to speak not with your own feeling, but with hers. Have you ever loved?"

The young girl blushed and appeared confused. I put on my sweetest smile and approached her.

"Trust to me, mademoiselle, I will give you lessons. The preface to the theatre, is love."

I seized her hand, and carried it to my lips with a tenderness, that was somewhat rough.

"You will observe," said I to her, assuming a declamatory manner.

I withdrew a few steps, and returned toward her, reciting with an impassioned manner, some tragic verses.

She enjoyed the play; besides the poor girl had no time to become rebellious; she had not supped the evening previous, and carried her fortune on her back.

She had by degrees sold everything even to her rags, always believing that there is a God who protects the orphan. She had presented herself at the Comédie Française, for permission to appear, not knowing all the influence necessary for the purpose

A roguish actor, who knew that I was the oracle of the place, took it into his head to send the poor girl to me. Need I tell you, marchioness, that though she did her best to defend herself, she was obliged to take from me her first lesson in declamation ; an eloquent lesson, for it was my heart that gave it.

“What is your name?” I asked her, after having showed her how to speak of love.

“*Mademoiselle Aurore de Livry.*”

“A beautiful name which will pass from mouth to mouth, like that of *Mademoiselle Lecouvreur.*”

“Where do you live?” (I was living at that time in the *rue Cloche Perche*).

“*Rue Saint-André-des-Arts*, where my mother died, and where I owe more than eighty crowns. God only knows all the insults I am obliged to suffer, for want of money.”

“I will not give you any, for a very good reason,” said I to her : “because if I do, you will feel for me gratitude, not love ; but my house is at your service, remain here, and I will take you to the *Comedie Française* ; after the play, we will go to sup gayly in good company ; after supper we will love each other until morning. When it shall be day, I will write upon your lap, some lines of tragedy, some gallant verses, until the hour when the loungers, shall come to take us to breakfast, and to stroll about Paris, not in a coach, but upon our twenty-year-old horses.”

Madame de Boufflers interrupted *Voltaire*.

“All things considered, you are a man of wit, and read the heart of a woman as if it were an open book. Any one else in your place, would have gone to his desk, and counted out eighty crowns, to offer them to mademoiselle de Livry. As you say: he would have received nothing but gratitude: a dead flower without perfume. I am quite sure, on the contrary that mademoiselle de Livry considered you at once as a lover and not as a benefactor.” Voltaire leaned gently on the arm of the marchioness.

As you say, madam (resumed he,) it was not without entreaties, without a struggle, and without tears. Oh! how beautiful she was in her resistance with her hair dishevelled, her eyes so mild, her cheeks, by turns pale and red. She has acknowledged to me since, that it was her virtue alone, that struggled against me, as if by an instinctive resistance, for she loved, before she had ever seen me. Like Cæsar, I had only to show myself, to conquer. Excuse this boast in the Roman emperor style, you know that I do not take advantage of it.

You are acquainted with my life, I will not relate word for word, all the phrases of this charming passion. The abbé de Bussi, Thiriot, the marquis de Mimeure, the prince de Vendôme, Génouville, could have told you how happy I was in my infatuation. I had thrown aside with disdain, the mantle of the philosophers, I no longer beheld human wisdom but under the figure of mademoiselle de Livry. Such

gay suppers ! The melancholy air that she had at our first interview, now only returned at occasional intervals, when I allowed her time to reflect ; her passion moreover, exhibited all the various characteristics : by turns it was serene like a beautiful sky or fiery like a horse, excited in the course, by turns wild and unruly, pensive and tender. The rue Cloche Perche was paradise for me. In those days I believed in paradise.

This happiness lasted full six weeks ; I did not keep any account, however ; I lived as it were, in a dream ; when I awoke, I did not desire to remember, or rather madame de Villars absorbed all my mind. Happy in having found another madness, when I lost that one.

III.

WHY ONE LOSES HIS MISTRESS.

If you could see my portrait, painted at that time by Largillière, you would behold the portrait of a happy man or rather of a lover, for the joys of love do not bestow that air of serenity and of beatitude, that is seen in the elect of good fortune. I shall never forget how Largillière painted this ; he used to come in the morning, always too early, for he found us in bed. She would spring out by the wall and call to him with her sweet voice : "Monsieur Largillière, throw me my rose-colored slippers !" He handed her her slippers, while I hastened to put on

my *robe de-chambre* and make my toilet. I sat for my picture, and I was never wearied, for at each moment she would come and lean over my chair. And besides, the sitting was broken by a frugal breakfast, of fruits and coffee. Largillière would have willingly given me his talent for my mistress. He wanted to paint her portrait also, that it might hang as a pendant to mine. But love never allows sufficient time for a painter to paint the portraits of two lovers. The portrait of the one is hardly finished, when already the other has gone.

Mademoiselle de Livry carried off my portrait, before it was hardly finished, to her chamber in the rue Saint-André-des-Arts, for I had ended by paying what she owed there.

You know the result: Génouville, my dear Génouville, was affected at this unexpected love which gave token of only ending with our lives; this little rogue, Génouville, came very assiduously to breakfast with us. He used to say, that never had wit and beauty been so well married. There was no end to epithalamiums that he sang in our honor, to the very day when he left me the privilege of singing an epithalamium upon himself, for he carried off my mistress.

"Cruel ones!" They said to me: "We will go on before you to the theatre," and they never returned. My best friend! my most cherished love! I was furious, and wanted to draw my sword; but she

wrote to me, asking for her slippers—her entire property!—I set to laughing, but I thought I was still laughing, when my eyes were bathed in tears, for in her letter, she said to me such tender, foolish, cruel, and charming things! I recollect this, for example: “Oh! my dearly beloved! I will adore you until death, for another is still you, yourself! Do we not always seek our first lover in our second? Fancy that I am dead, and write my epitaph: *Here lies one, who loved her lover well!*—If monsieur de Génouville carried me off, it was because we both thought, that if I remained any longer with you, you would never do anything. I leave you to the nine muses. Farewell!”

“Ah, marchioness!” exclaimed Voltaire, pressing the hand of madame de Boufflers, “it was not the nine muses that I wanted, but the tenth. I pursued the fugitive, ready for anything; not being able to find her, I shut myself up with my despair. Do you now believe in my tears of love?”

IV.

HISTORY OF MADEMOISELLE AURORE DE LIVRY.

“AND what became of mademoiselle de Livry?” asked the marchioness, at the end of the confession.

“She became a marchioness just like you.”

“Let me hear then the end of her history.”

Génouville did not keep her a long time captive;

she had a passion for comedy ; and a fondness for being carried off : a poor actor, a bastard imitator of Baron, carried her off from Génouville, and took her to England, with a company picked up from almost everywhere. This chance company lodged in an inn, which had for its sign, *L'Ecu de France*. After a delay of six weeks, the actors and actresses were enabled to exhibit their talent and their persons, upon a wretched theatre in the city. Mademoiselle de Livry, who played the parts of Leconvreur, was the only one applauded ; but she could not save the company from shipwreck : she remained at the inn, as security for the debt of her companions. As she was beautiful and charming, the innkeeper did not care to revenge upon her, all the scurvy tricks played on him by those actors, without house or home, law or gospel. Far from reproaching her, he told her that she might live at his inn, without troubling herself about her board or lodging, adding that he would be too happy to have such a beautiful girl as a sign. Beautiful girls are like the swallows : they bring good luck to the house.

I said an inn, I should have said a café. The house was divided into two parts quite distinct : on one side, beer, pipes, and common people ; on the other, coffee, the snuff-box, and gentlefolks, mostly Frenchmen.

Mademoiselle de Livry, be it understood, never showed herself in either one place or the other. She

VOL. I.—6

lived with a great deal of reserve in a chamber above, waiting for fortune to remove her. Now and then, however, she passed through the café, with the light step of a fairy, on her return from her walk or from church, for she possessed all the weaknesses, even that of going to the confessional.

The innkeeper, when she thus passed with such an admirable grace, did not fail to remark to his customers, that he had beneath his roof, the pearl of beautiful girls.

Among his customers, there happened to be the marquis de Gouvernet, who until that time had spent his revenue in the purchase of rare flowers. You have heard, marchioness, of his rage for tulips. The one which he called *madame de Parabère*, cost him a thousand pistoles. This arch fool would have gone to Peru to pluck a blue rose.

As soon as he beheld mademoiselle de Livry, he seemed to forget his passion for flowers. However, the first time he attempted to address her, it was with a bouquet which had cost him fifty crowns. Mademoiselle de Livry looked at the marquis, took the bouquet, and departed without knowing very well why.

She had taken the bouquet in spite of herself, as if the devil had guided her hand. The marquis asked for permission to visit her, she refused point-blank; he insisted, she resisted; he was not the man to abandon the siege, he who had shown such prowess and

such resolution, against the most beautiful tulips of Harlæm.

"I wish to visit her," said the marquis de Gouvernet one morning to the innkeeper.

"It is impossible!" said the man, who knew the pride and the virtue of mademoiselle de Livry (there is some virtue, everywhere).

"It must be possible," said the marquis. "Where is the difficulty of entering a chamber? Order my chocolate and newspaper to be taken to her room."

The innkeeper did not dare to reply. The marquis mounted the stairs, with the air of a man who will not stop on the way; the innkeeper followed him with the cup of chocolate, the *Gazette de Hollande* and the *Mercure de France*. The key was in the door, the marquis opened it and entered gayly, as if it were the simplest matter in the world.

"O my God!" exclaimed mademoiselle de Livry, "who is it that enters my room with such a noise?"

"It is a man," says the marquis. "There is no occasion for your recommending yourself to God." And addressing the innkeeper: "Well! put it upon the table, for I am hungry. Madame, take a seat, you see that I am going to do so myself."

"Monsieur," said mademoiselle de Livry, "you ought to get up and leave, for I can not receive the visit of a stranger."

"But I am no stranger: my name is the marquis

de Gouvernet, I have travelled over the whole world ; I am not vicious, I have not cut off any heads, except of roses or tulips, and besides, I have suffered deeply every time that has occurred. Are you fond of tulips, mademoiselle ? But why talk of tulips when the chocolate is ready ? Will you take some chocolate with me, or without me ? As you please."

"This man is killing me," said mademoiselle de Livry, looking toward the innkeeper.

V.

HOW ONE BECOMES A MARCHIONESS.

VOLTAIRE continued the story of mademoiselle de Livry, without noticing the bell which rang for breakfast :—

Yes, marchioness, this devil of a fellow, got an entrance to the room of the poor deserted actress. She finished, by coming to a determination and taking a seat herself.

"Will you read the newspaper to me ?" continued the marquis, "or do you prefer to work at your tapestry with those fairy hands ?"

"Mademoiselle," said the innkeeper, respectfully, in a low voice to the actress, "he is an original, but do not be offended, he is an excellent person. He gave my daughter a hundred guineas on her wedding-day."

In the meantime, the marquis de Gouvernet had

opened his journal, and swallowed some mouthfuls of his chocolate, with no more ceremony than if he had been at home. Mademoiselle de Livry resumed her tapestry-work.

"Let us be frank," said the marquis, "you are poor."

"As I am not in want of anything," mademoiselle de Livry replied, "I am not poor."

"That is mere talk; I know that we can not eat money, as King Midas proved; but notwithstanding, without money we may die of hunger."

"I shall never die of that."

"Do not be so proud, mademoiselle; I know your virtue, I see your beauty, I have the right to speak to you frankly. Well! this fine fellow of an inn-keeper may do his best, you still are in want of everything, and sometimes it happens, from pride, that you deprive yourself of a meal."

"It is by order of my physician," said mademoiselle de Livry blushing.

"May the devil take you!" said the marquis de Gouvernet, wiping away a tear. "Do you not see that I am weeping like a child? Listen: I have wherewithal to support fifty pretty girls like you; will you take my key? you can bestow the charity yourself."

Mademoiselle proudly rejected this proposition. However, she did not desire to sustain the siege, to the extent of a famine. She signed a treaty of alliance

"I will marry you," said he at the third interview.

"It is folly," said she with tenderness.

"So much the better," replied the marquis, "for I am still of the age to commit folly."

"Yes, but I will prevent you from committing such a one as that ; a man of your condition can not marry a girl without fortune."

It was in vain that he plead his cause, mademoiselle de Livry was not willing to proceed any further in this alliance. After a turn one day about London, he said :—

"I have just taken two tickets in the state lottery, you must choose one of them."

"Well, I will, if it be only to make curl-papers."

VI.

YOU AND THOU.

Madame de Boufflers interrupted Voltaire :—

"I understand," said she, "the lottery-ticket drew ten or twenty thousand pounds sterling. It is a fine subject for a comedy."

"Yes," replied Voltaire, "I thought of that.* You can guess then, madame, the result?"

"Yes, mademoiselle de Livry possessed a dowry, and touched with the delicacy of her lover, became the marchioness de Gouvernet."

* "L'Ecoissaise." Lindam (mademoiselle de Livry), Freeport (the marquis de Gouvernet).

Monsieur de Voltaire continued :—

The rumor of this adventure became current in Paris and Versailles, in the saloons and the green-rooms ; the princesses of the court and those of the theatre, never wearied of the story. As for me, I listened in silence, always sad when I thought that in losing mademoiselle de Livry, I had lost youth itself.

I consoled myself somewhat with the hope of seeing her again.

“She can not have forgotten me,” I said to myself ; “as soon as her beautiful eyes are laid upon me, she will extend her hand to me, and I will throw myself into her arms.” She installed herself with a good deal of fuss in the rue Saint-Dominique, where monsieur de Gouvernet had a splendid hotel, but above all, a garden like those in the *Arabian Nights*. The marchioness was accordingly christened on her arrival in Paris, “The Sultana of Flowers.”

The *Henriade* had just been published ; I sent her a copy printed upon fine Holland paper, with a little note, in which I recalled to her mind, that all the love verses about Gabrielle, had been written at her feet, and from her inspiration.

Not a word in answer. The cruel one had taken her title of wife, in downright earnest.

I could not describe to you my rage. I was somewhat disarmed, in learning through madame de Bernières, who visited her, that the marchioness de Gou-

vernet had redeemed my portrait, which she had pledged at Gersaint's, on the Pont Notre-Dame, on her departure for London.

I recovered my confidence in our old passion, and went boldly to her hotel.

"Your name?" asked an arrogant footman, a great devil of a footman, built like a Hercules, and all over gold.

"Monsieur de Voltaire."

"Well! please to write your name, and to-morrow I will give you an answer, for the name of *monsieur de Voltaire*, is not down on the list of her ladyship, the marchioness."

You are aware, that at that time, I was received with open arms in the best houses; I was the guest of dukes and princes; so the arrogance of the footman of her ladyship, the marchioness de Gouvernet did not humiliate me, but almost made me die a laughing. On my return home, while I was still in fine humor, I took a scrap of paper, and wrote, off hand, this epistle to the marchioness:—

"Phillis, where are those happy days,
When with a hackney-coach content,
You had no train your steps to grace,
Your charms your only ornament;
When you our humble supper made
A heavenly banquet seem to me,
And yielded, in your gayety,
'To him who, happy but betrayed,
Had sworn for life your slave to be?"

Voltaire had hardly repeated the first line of this epistle, when the marchioness de Boufflers, who knew it by heart, as all the world of letters did then, interrupted him to repeat it herself.

"There is a masterpiece, monsieur de Voltaire, worthy of the antique! If you had written me that epistle, and I had been the marchioness de Gouvernet, I should, without drum or trumpet, have abandoned my hotel and my footman to follow you, even to the end of the world. But what was her answer?"

"She answered me with four lines, that the wisdom of the ancients should have inscribed in letters of gold, upon the pediment of their temples or the pedestals of their statues:—

"To brighter youth its pleasures leave,
Its joys and transports ever new;
And since life's moments are but two,
Let us then one to wisdom give."

"It is charming! And you became virtuous, both of you?"

"More or less, marchioness. She wrote an epitaph upon her heart; as for me, I consoled mine with singing:—

"*Fertur et abducta Lyrnesside tristis Achilles,
Hæmonia curas atteunasse lyra.**

I did as Achilles."

* Ovid, *Tristia*, lib. iv.

VII.

THE LAST HOURS OF LOVE.

MONSIEUR de Voltaire never saw mademoiselle de Livry but once again ; it was a few days before his death ; he had his hair powdered, he drank off three or four cups of coffee ; he got into the marquis de Villette's carriage, and ordered the coachman to drive him to the hotel Gouvernet.

This time, the doors opened wide ; the marchioness had been informed in advance ; besides, she could receive him without risk, she was more than eighty. Voltaire, all out of breath, took her hand and kissed it.

"This is all that we can do now, marchioness," said he, shaking his head.

She was quite overcome at beholding him so aged and broken.

"Ah, my friend Voltaire," said she to him with a melancholy smile, "what have we done with our twenty years ? We are no longer the wild boy and girl, who loved each other so gayly in the rue Cloche Perche or in the rue Saint-André-des-Arts."

"It is true," said Voltaire, "we die every twenty years, we die every day, until the last hour when the body is only a winding-sheet which covers the bones. Happy are those who have lived ! On that score, marchioness, you have no reason to complain, nor I."

“I thank God! my life has been a romance easy to read; but yours, what an eloquent and desperate struggle! You have renewed the war of the Titans.”

“Yes, yes, I have unbound Prometheus: my hands are still all bloody; it is no matter, now that I have traced my furrow of anguish, I have forgotten the labor and the tears, in order to think only of the roses which have bloomed beneath my feet. Ah! Phillis, what a spring-like freshness there was upon your cheeks of twenty years? I never cultivated peaches at Ferney, without kissing one every year in your honor. Ah! madame, have the vanities of the world ever allowed the enjoyment of such happy hours of love and sport, as we spent more than half a century ago?”

“Alas!” said the marchioness, who no longer saw before her Voltaire, the strange old man of eighty winters, but beheld again in imagination, the Voltaire painted by Largillière, “I would readily give my hotel, my farms in Beauce and Brittany, my diamonds and my carriages, with my footman into the bargain, in order to live over again one hour of our early life.”

“And I,” said Voltaire, lightening up, “I would give my tragedies and my epic poem, my histories and my tales, all my past glory, all my claims in posterity with my seat in the Academy in the bargain, for a single kiss of the good old times!”

VIII.

WHEN WE ARE DEAD.

DID they embrace? History does not tell us. The marchioness had become religious. A priest who lived at her table, and who put her to sleep in the evening with his prayers, came in and rudely disturbed the interview of the old lovers.

When Voltaire had gone, this priest frightened the marchioness, by telling her, that she had just received Antichrist in her house; she wished to do penance for this return to forbidden pleasure. She had always kept Voltaire's portrait; on the next day a tall lacquey carried this portrait to the house of Monsieur Villette, upon the quai des Théatins, where Voltaire had come from Ferney to die. Voltaire gave this long-beloved portrait to his niece, in accordance with the wish of madame de Gouvernet, who desired to conceal her fears of the Antichrist, beneath an air of politeness.*

The 30th of May, 1778, Monsieur de Voltaire, yielded up his soul to God, and mademoiselle de Livry, marchioness de Gouvernet, also set out for

* This portrait by Largillière, which is known by some tolerable or detestable copies, as that at the Museum of Versailles, in the hall of the Academicians, is now in the château de Villette, in a gallery of illustrious persons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. An engraving from the original of this portrait, is prefixed to this volume.

the mansions of the dead. It may be said, that they made the journey together.

France had rejected Voltaire living ; when dead, France still proscribed him. He had prepared a tomb for himself in the burial-place of Ferney, beneath the sky where he had grown old, and where he had done some good ; they were not willing to allow him that corner of the earth which was his own ; they decided that he who had built the church, had no right of citizenship in the burial-ground. While the remains of Voltaire knocked in vain at the doors of all the churches and all the church-yards, her ladyship the marchioness de Gouvernet, was interred with great pomp, in the church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

Did they meet on high, by the side of Him, who according to Voltaire

“Has deigned to tell us all, in telling us to love !”

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO.

I.

SUMMARY OF PLATO'S WORK.

IN constructing the imperishable edifice of his republic, Plato has summoned to the task, Lycurgus and Socrates, laws human and laws divine.

The work of Lycurgus has long been a ruin, because it was the house built on the shifting sand of politics; that of Socrates stands intact, consecrated by more than twenty centuries, because it is the immortal work of philosophy, because it is built on the divine principles of the good and the beautiful, and because it is the republic of souls.

Plato wrote this beautiful book to give a sovereign lesson to the world, almost constantly under heavenly inspiration. The sky was veiled, he foresaw the night which came, he desired to seize again the ray which had illuminated at the best times, the foreheads of the sages of India, Egypt, and Greece.

He desired to survive his country in his ideal

monument, like Phidias in his visible temple. He has said to posterity : " Behold what was the republic of Lycurgus, and behold what it would have been with my laws. Oh ! you who shall hearken to me, when I am no more, realize my dream !"—Now, what was this dream ? how can we portray faithfully this fiction, whose feet rest on the earth, and whose brow mounts to the infinite ?

Plato believed that the best of governments could be established, in a community free from luxury, ambition, and injustice, in which virtue and ability would alone be called to supreme power. So far, all is well, but Plato, absolute in his principles, goes on to dictate impossible laws.

The *Republic* is divided into ten books. It is generally known to consist of a dialogue between Socrates, Cephalus, Polymarchus his son, Glaucon and Adimantes, brothers of Plato, Thrasymachus the sophist, and Clitophon the son of Aristonymus. Plato speaks under the character of Socrates, out of his desire to perpetuate the name of his master. The scene of the dialogue is at the Piræus, in the house of the old man Cephalus. The first page is vividly painted. It presents a disposition of the characters full of life and brilliancy. Let us translate its chief features. Socrates (that is to say, Plato) goes to the Piræus with Glaucon to offer his prayers to Diana, on a festival. As they are returning to the city, Polymarchus and his friends come up to them and forcibly

detain them. "Do you not know that the torch-light horse-race takes place to-night, in honor of the goddess; there will be a vigil in addition: we will go after supper, and amuse ourselves with sages and fools." Socrates returns to the Piræus, and enters the residence of Polymarchus, where he finds the family assembled with some friends. The aged Cephalus was present with his head encircled by a crown, on account of his having made that day a domestic sacrifice. They seat themselves on chairs ranged in a circle. By the first words uttered, we recognise the highest school of philosophy. The aged Cephalus commences with these words: "Socrates, you come too seldom to the Piræus; and yet I love so much to listen to you! If I were strong enough to go to the city, I would spare you the trouble of coming here. Do you not know, that in the same measure that the physical powers forsake us, the soul nourishes itself on the sacred fruit of wisdom. There are those who complain at growing old, does the soul ever grow old? Should we regret our slavery to the physical passions? I remember sometime ago, happening to be with the poet Sophocles, some one asked him, if age still permitted him to taste the joys of love? 'The Gods forbid!' he exclaimed, 'I have long since shaken off the yoke of that furious and brutal master.'—Yes, when the violence of the passions is deadened, we find ourselves delivered from a host of insane tyrants."

Thus from the opening of the volume, we breathe the invigorating atmosphere of wisdom, and detach our souls without regret from earth and from its passions.

The whole of this first book is devoted to the sovereignty of justice, the bountiful mother of wisdom and of virtue. It is with such travelling companions that Plato sets forth for the ideal regions of his republic.

In the second book, Plato analyzes good and evil into two principles, which contend in the world without ever coming to a decisive battle, because they live one by means of the other.

It is in the third book, that Plato banishes poets from his republic, because poets by their fictions compromise the sacred character of the gods and the pious memory of heroes, because they weaken the courage of warriors, and lead astray the imagination of the young. After this sacrilegious banishment, Plato is desirous that temperance should banish the physicians, and justice the judges. We advance with gigantic strides toward the impossible republic. Plato is studious for equality and attains inequality. He divides the state into three races: those of gold, of silver, and of brass, the warriors, the magistrates, and the mercenaries.

In the fourth book, the republic is completely organized. Plato proscribes in it both opulence and poverty. The republic is strong, because it is just

The citizen is his own master, because the soul governs the body, and the mind rises victorious from invading attacks of the passions.

In the fifth book, the education of women is discussed. Plato makes men of them. He destroys the family in order to destroy the privileges of birth. All the sterile germs of communism are to be found here. The women are in common; they belong to all, and give birth to children, which the republic, the sole mother, tears from their bosom. The same book is devoted to the study of slavery and to the laws of war.

The sixth book is in praise of philosophy. The philosopher alone, according to Plato, is worthy to command men. Philosophers must become kings, or kings philosophers. Plato then commences the sublime description of the visible and invisible world; the visible world in which all is false and illusive, the invisible, in which all is true, for it is inhabited by God.

The following book is a continuous aspiration after the beautiful. Plato compares the world to a dark cavern, in which men live enchained by their passions. Those who do not break their chains and seek invigoration in the open air, are not men, but shadows who dwell in the tomb; such will never be called to power in the republic of Plato. It is the contemplation of the divine world which instructs men how to govern the lower world.

In the eighth book, Plato passes in review, the five kinds of government: Aristocracy, timocracy or government of ambition, oligarchy or government of the rich, democracy which, by means of liberty, gives birth to license and tyranny, two children of the same birth. Plato, doubtless irritated at the jealous and ambitious men of Lacedemonia, at the haughtiness, avarice, and ignorance of the rich men of his time; by the indifference and contempt of certain democrats for all that is elevated, by the odious reign of the tyrant, whom democracy has too often suckled, accords his solemn suffrage to the first of these five forms. But the aristocracy which Plato is on the point of causing to be proclaimed by a herald, has no similitude with the aristocracy of modern times. The philosopher-king or king-philosopher of Plato, is supported only by virtue and justice. To govern in the republic of Plato, it would be needful that God himself should descend upon the earth.

In the tenth book, Plato seeks whether there is anything beyond his republic: he sounds the mysteries of the tomb; the tomb is in his eyes the path to the skies. This concluding book is a sublime revelation of the immortality of the soul.

Now that I have stretched out a summary of this book, in which Plato institutes the education of a people, and illuminates justice by rays which are all divine, I will examine some important points, and some that are merely curious.

II.

ON OLIGARCHY, DEMOCRACY, AND TYRANNY.

“WHAT do you understand by oligarchy? It is the reign of money, it is a form of government in which the census decides the rank of each citizen, in which the rich imperiously rule the poor. Luxury at home and abroad becomes contagious, men throw themselves furiously upon money—on the money of others—to gild the toys of vanity. The stronger the reign of money becomes, the more is that of virtue effaced. Are not money and virtue like two weights in the scale, one of which can not rise unless the other sinks? Therefore are virtue and men of worth less esteemed in proportion, to the high value set upon riches and rich men. Ambition becomes naught but intrigue. A law is made establishing the conditions requisite for admission into power. A tax must be paid for taking the helm; and where does the vessel go to?—This state is not one by its very nature, or rather it contains two states, the one composed of the rich, the other of the poor, who dwell on the same soil and are incessantly striving to destroy each other.”—Is not this somewhat the picture of the reign of the last king?*

While those enriched yesterday, passed their time in counting their money, to convince themselves that they would have some-

* Louis Philippe.

thing left to live upon beyond the tomb, while their wives were driving through public places, in quest of adventures in luxurious equipages, while their sons mocked at them with girls known to all the world, because they had been common to all the world, the people, who already foresaw the sovereignty of intellect, courageously gave their last penny for the purchase of a book—the bread of the mind. At the time when the rich were counting their money, the poor were counting the days which still separated them from the regeneration preached by Christ.

Plato afterward paints in lively colors, the democrat and the tyrant, for according to him, according to the law of humanity, oligarchy leads to democracy, and democracy to tyranny. The democrat of Plato lives from hand to mouth, gathering all the fruits of life which hang over his path. To-day he revels in intoxication and bacchanalian songs, to-morrow he will edify his fellow-citizens, by fasting and drinking nothing but water. He passes gayly from idleness to labor, and from labor to idleness. All of a sudden behold him a philosopher, an orator, a statesman. He speaks and acts, but does he know what he says and does? Free as the wind, which blows from all points, he will apply himself to commerce to acquire riches, or to war, to display his heroism. In a word, this friend of equality unites in himself all sorts of manners and characters. He inscribes on his standard: LIBERTY, EQUALITY, VARIETY. He is everything,

and he is nothing, poor and obscure to-day, he will be in power to-morrow. He submits only to his passions and his caprices, he amuses himself with everything, and is amused by everything. If he lives sometimes for his country and for his heart, does he not also often live for his curiosity?

Democracy is expansion, diffusion; it is life poured out in impetuous torrents. Its world is, however, subjected to revolutions, no matter how beautiful the republic may be, after having devoured her first offspring, she will be devoured by her last: for she will give birth to tyranny. When a democratic state, pervaded by an ardent love of liberty, is governed by evil men who pour forth strong liquor, and make her drink to intoxication, then does the democratic state, in the fumes of the strong wine, abandon herself to all kinds of license; on the first repression accuses her rulers, and overthrows them on the pretext that they are unfriendly to liberty. All those who have a respect for law, are men of no account, voluntary slaves. Then, through unbridled liberty, men fall into anarchy, everybody is a magistrate and administers the law, but no one chooses to acknowledge the law. The old are less heeded than the young. The son gives advice to his father, the disciple leads the master. Women become men, but virtue gains nothing by the change; love rests laughingly in the strong arms of violence. Let us forget nothing, and in the words of *Æschylus*, let us say every

thing that comes to our lips. Here Plato seriously relates how "little dogs are on the same footing as their masters ;" how "donkeys accustomed to walk with heads erect, and not to inconvenience themselves, jostle all they meet if way is not made for them." Who doubts, but that with us, anarchy may give the same privilege to donkeys and puppies !

The ship has no longer sails or helm. The captain does not dare to contend against the wind, for he would excite mutiny in all the crew. The captain exists but in name, the greenest hand is more listened to than he is. Now, as men always go from one excess to another, if the sails of the ship are again spread, it is to run before the wind, from democracy to tyranny. It is so with everything in this world : Winter in his mantle of snow gives birth to Spring, garlanded with roses ; the joyous Autumn, crowned with grapes, begets the heartless old tyrant Winter. Servitude is the mother of Liberty, Liberty reproduces Servitude in her days of license, when she falls madly in love with noisy declaimers, who are ever talking and never thinking, who stop the mouth of truth if truth terrifies them, who make themselves kings of the populace, by laying criminal hands on the fortune of the rich — who have become rich by labor. What do they do with this fortune, for which they express their contempt so loudly. They give a few bribes to the poor, and keep the lion's share. The rich seeing themselves plundered, are desirous of

defending themselves; they appeal to the people, but the others accuse them of wishing to conspire against the liberties of the people. The people, whose sole property is liberty, are induced to side with calumny. It thus happens that the rich, who were accused yesterday of being oligarchists, and who were not, become such to-day. The tyrant is, however, born from the stalk of the protectors of the people. He is as yet only a protector, but he is to become a tyrant. In Arcadia, in the temple of the Lycean Jupiter, it was said that he who had tasted human entrails, mixed with those of other victims, was changed into a wolf: in like manner, when the protector of the people moistens his tongue and lips with the blood of his fellow-citizens, when he plunges his impious hands into the entrails of his neighbors and friends, when he decimates the state by bloodshed and exile, when he proposes the abolition of debts and the partition of property, is he not to perish by the hand of his enemies, or become the tyrant of the republic? The tyrant, is the wolf — the wolf in sheep's clothing.

Plato passes in review the acts of the tyrant. In order to rule the better, he commences by making himself a slave: he servilely flatters the passions of the people, he talks to them of plots against the protector of the people, he demands guards to make the sovereignty of the people respected; the people, always the people, like him who talks continually of love, and whose heart never beats. "What do the

last of the rich men do? They take to themselves the oracle addressed to Cræsus: '*He flies toward the river Hermus, and does not fear the reproach of cowardice.*' And they are right, for they would have no occasion a second time to fear such reproach. In fact, it costs them their lives if they are caught in their flight. The protector meanwhile is not asleep; he mounts openly to the chariot of state, overturns right and left, those who possess courage, riches, prudence, greatness of soul. He plays the opposite part to that of the physicians, who purge the body by removing from it that which is hurtful. He composes his guards of the scum of the country, who flock to him in crowds; after having ruined the rich, despoiled the temples, squandered the public fortunes, he lays his sacrilegious grasp on the harvest. The people, who is the father of the tyrant, will support him and his."

III.

WHY HOMER IS BANISHED FROM THE REPUBLIC.

PLATO banished the Muses, because the Muses were the courtesans of the mind. They led young minds astray into all the follies of dreams, into all lying delusions. Plato, a poet himself, by the creation of this republic, from which he repels the poets, loved Homer and Hesiod, declaring at the same time in the tone of a pedagogue, that the poets, "those

of the present as well as those of the past, do nothing but set forth fables for the *amusement* of the human race." He does not pardon Homer for his Olympian fictions; he desires that all poetry should be in the beautiful; now, the beautiful, in his eyes, is the truth in its splendor. Plato, besides, is not a rigorous logician; in condemning the images, the accent, the character of poetry, he repels Truth herself. He does not admit, and I thank him for it, that art is the imitation of nature, like his bad disciple Aristotle; his truth being that of the poets, like the mysterious realism of Rembrandt.

"He is afraid of Homer not only for his falsehoods, but also for his truths." Though all this were true, these are not the sort of things to be spoken of before children, whose reason is still undeveloped. They should be buried in silence. Do you not see in the Republic of Plato, the scissors of the censor suspended like the sword of Damocles, over the germinating thought?

Plato loved Virtue too much, not to sacrifice too much to her. In depriving her of her poetic aureole, does he make her loved? Does he not make young imaginations sterile, by condemning them to the culture of but one product? The blight must make the wheat poor in harvest-time, but who could dispense with the cyanus at the dawn of spring? The cyanus forms the coronals of lovers, they are the poetry of youth.

But Plato would not build his republic on fictions, he did not wish to erect the palace of his thought on the quicksands of fable, scarcely admitting that fable is a torch borne in the hand of Truth. When his palace is built by the masons, he will perhaps summon the decorators and sculptors to enliven the columns and façades, but he wishes before all, that the laws of his republic should be inscribed on walls of brass. If Homer did not give the rein to his imagination, a wild steed, intoxicated by the course, by the fragrance of the turf he prances over, the rural freshness of the forests of Diana which he traverses; if Homer relied only on his wisdom to traverse the ideal world, Plato would kiss his venerated sandal, and say to him: "My brother, the world which I create is yours;" but Homer is more than a sage of Greece, he is a demi-god, he is a poet. Plato admires him, and forbids him to enter his door. In truth, this radiant and sublime Bohemian of the Olympic centuries, would cause impiety to flourish in the Platonic church. Is it not he who says: "I should prefer to the empire of the dead, the condition of the slave of a poor man, who lives by the labor of his hands." Plato becomes indignant with reason, and exclaims: "Those who are destined to the life of a freeman, should prefer death to servitude." The legislator does not wish that Homer's hell should be known in his republic. "Let us efface from the poem of Homer, those odious and formidable names of Cocytus,

Styx, the Manes, and the like, which make the most resolute shudder. Let us dread lest the terror they inspire, should chill and weaken the courage of our warriors." In truth, how suddenly are those who would brave death, arrested by the thought of the Styx or the Cocytus! Mahomet, who was also a great legislator, seems to have had this passage in mind when he created the dogma of fatalism. Mahomet has gone farther, he has indicated the realization beyond the tomb of all the poetic fancies of oriental revery. He has filled the path to the tomb, with blossoms and with fragrance.

It is in this style that Plato draws up his acts of accusation against the poets: "If we desire that the defenders of our republic should hold dissensions in abhorrence, let us not speak to them of the combats of the gods. And if our poets keep silence, let not our artists, in their pictures or tapestries, ever represent the discords of Olympus. Let it never be heard that Juno was put in irons by her son, and Vulcan hurled from heaven by his father. Let not Homer say: *The gods go from city to city, disguised under feigned shapes*, for such metamorphoses are unworthy of divinity. Let not the mothers cradle their children in these fictions, which at a later period will destroy their faith and their prowess. Let not Æschylus cause Apollo the god of light and truth, to utter odious lies, for Æschylus says by the mouth of Thetis: "*Apollo who was present at my marriage, sang*

at the feast that I should be a fortunate mother, I believed that he uttered an oracle and not a falsehood. Yet this god, who sang of my happiness, and predicted for me all the joys of marriage, this god is the murderer of my son."

"Let us strike out of the poems of Homer, all the impious verses, such as these: "*Alas, nothing then remains of us after death, but a shadow, a vain image deprived of sensation and reason.*"

It must be admitted with sorrow, that the accusations of Plato (I have brought forward the most terrible), are mere cavils, whose spirit recalls too much the old French criticism, which put on its spectacles to examine the details of a work, without troubling itself about the harmony of the whole. We must pardon Plato, on account of his contempt for tragic discussion.

Homer is therefore banished from the republic of Plato, in much the same way that Lamartine would be at the present day from our own, if Lamartine were not now and then both Plato and Homer. Lamartine the statesman, has repeated to Lamartine the poet, the words of Plato: "If thou comest among us to cause us to admire thy art, we would render homage to thee as to a divine being, of ravishing and marvellous power, but we would tell thee, that our republic is not formed to possess a man like thee; we would banish thee after having poured per-

fumes upon thy head, and adorned thee with sacred chaplets."

Plato is too much of a poet not to adore the muse of Homer. "I have loved him from my childhood,* but I condemn him, because the respect which I owe to a man, is less than that which I owe to truth." But at the same time Plato is too much of a philosopher to forget that, from ancient date, Poetry has been a very bad guide for her sister Philosophy, "this snarling dog which barks at her mistress * * The company of sages are desirous of elevating themselves above Jupiter * * These subtle thinkers whose poverty sharpens their wits." The divine Plato however, raises himself above these family quarrels, and, while he laments at beholding poems and tragedies soften men into tears, he permits Homer to come and defend his cause before the chiefs of the republic, either in an ode, in iambics or a hymn. To permit Homer to come and defend his cause, is to permit him in a fraternal way to triumph. However, if Homer triumphs he is to sing henceforth solely in honor of the gods and of great men. "The voluptuous muse, whether epic or lyric, is banished for ever," if

* Plato commenced his career as a poet, the muse of Homer suckled him. These verses are attributed to him, on the mirror which Lais the courtesan dedicated to Venus in her old age:—

"Venus, take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was.
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see."

Homer does not prove to the Areopagus that poetry possesses republican virtues, that it is based on reason and on truth.

“Should we not imitate,” says Plato, “the conduct of lovers who do violence to themselves to tear themselves from their passion, after they have acknowledged its danger?” The legislator will imitate Ulysses, who caused himself to be fastened to the mast of the ship, in order to pass by the sirens; he will chain himself with all his power to reason, in order to pass through without danger the enchantments of the Muses, those sirens of souls.

IV.

HOW HOMER WOULD HAVE DEFENDED HIMSELF BEFORE PLATO.

AND if Homer had still come and plead his cause before Plato! “You, O Plato, banish me! you who accept the title of the Homer of philosophy, you have not understood me. You have not understood the moral conclusion of the *Iliad*. Every poem is a sphynx, every reader should be an *Cedipus*. Have I not plainly proved, that the people are always the victims of the madness of kings? I made my appearance at the close of the primitive world; the dawn of the social world has spread its rays over my brow, it was not Phemius who was my master, it was misfortune. I have wandered from city to

city, with Poverty as my sole companion, but Poverty is often the tenth muse. With her I have penetrated to the sanctuary of Osiris, I have taken fire from the altar, and, greater than Prometheus who desired to create men, I have created gods ! Olympus is mine. Jupiter and Juno in their radiant embraces drink of the pleasure, which my poverty pours forth in full floods.

“Thy republic, O Plato ! was in my heart. I have sung the fall of kings and the royalty of nations. Have I not taught liberty, by singing the pride of heroic nations ? Was I not republican when I called the kings *demobores*, or devourers of the people ?

“Condemn not my muse, O Plato ! all those who have come to her, have drunk of her divine milk. She has unveiled her bounteous bosom to all the destinies of the country. She has said to the ancient East : “Let night fall on thee, and bury thee up ;” she has said to the New World : “Turn thee to the sun ; Apollo and Minerva are with me.”

V.

ON THE PROSCRIPTION OF COURTESANS.

AFTER having banished the poets, Plato banishes the courtesans.

In Greece, the courtesans were almost all muses :* Sappho who sang, Lais who personified beauty, Aspasia who inspired Socrates, or who counselled Pericles, Leontium, slave of Epicurus, but redeeming her heart by her noble love for the beautiful Timarchus.† Corinth was the tabernacle of voluptuousness. Thus when Plato proscribed the fair Corinthian, it was as if he had said "the ardent courtesan."

Plato was a reformer who protested against the consecrated religion, by protecting philosophy against every aggression of love. The Greeks had dedicated the academy to Minerva; but they had borne there

* Did the French when, adopting the Grecian style, they made choice of the dress of the courtesans, and not of the wives and mothers of Athens, know that the courtesans were muses ?

† Leontium proves, by her letter to Lamia, that all the delicacies of love were known to her: "Epicurus, who pretends to be a Socrates, would make of me a Xantippe; but I will go to the end of the world rather than bear the grossness of his insults. You know that charming youth, born on the banks of Cephysus. That beautiful Timarchus, who says to me when I speak to him, 'You are so beautiful, O Leontium, that I do not comprehend a word,' has not seduced me by giving me the most precious of tunics, handfuls of gold, slaves brought from the most remote lands, but has enchanted me for ever by his voice and his glance. Speak no more to me of Epicurus; he is no longer a philosopher, but a Cappadocian rustic, who sees the ramparts of Minerva for the first time."

in triumph, the statue of love. By this symbol, they desired to bring together pleasure and wisdom. Montaigne adopting this religion, has said : " He who takes from the Muses their amorous imaginations, robs them of their most pleasing attraction and the noblest subject of their work, and he who would cause Love to lose communion with, and the service of poetry, would deprive him of his strongest arms."

The mistake of Plato, was not having been a lover. No man in this world who has not had an hour of folly, the folly of love—will ever attain to sovereign wisdom.

Plato would have soared still higher, if he had accepted the wings of love and poetry. His austere philosophy was not able to impress the multitude. Homer sang, Plato spoke. The philosophy of Homer is all in images, that of Plato is in sentences. Homer changed men into gods, and gods into men, so that his gods should be visible, and his men should aspire to climb Olympus. Plato raises his ideal divinity so high, that his disciples themselves can not catch a glimpse of him. Jesus Christ was the God-man and the man-God of Homer. The philosophy of Plato is the glorious spouse of a god, she is the proud Juno. But Plato has forgotten that Juno, to make herself attractive, took the girdle of Venus.

VI.

OF THE COMMUNITY OF WIVES AND CHILDREN.

THE fifth book is the most curious. Plato might have admitted there the reveries of the poets, when he judged it fitting "to put the women on the stage, after having exhibited the men there." I commence with this comparison. "Do we believe that the females of the dogs, should keep guard like them over the flock, go to the chase, and do everything in common?" He asks himself, if they should not rather stick to the kennel, give birth to puppies and take care of them. He decides for the community of labor. He concludes from this, that women must receive the same education as men. They must practise music and the gymnastics, they must accustom themselves to the discipline of war; learn to handle arms and ride on horseback. They will present themselves naked in the gymnasia where they will wrestle with men. But modesty? Modesty does not blush at a nudity, as calm and austere as that of marble. It is an innovation which will excite raillery, but Plato does not trouble himself about that. He recollects, however, that he said in one of his early books, that there was a chasm between the nature of man and that of woman. Now how can he admit the community of labor? Plato hesitates. "We are in the same condition as a man who has tumbled into

the water. Whether it be a fish-pond or the open sea, is of little matter, he will perish if he does not swim. Let us imitate him ; let us take to swimming to overmaster this reflux. Perhaps some dolphin will lend us the aid of his back." Plato escapes by swimming and reaches the ideal shore of his republic. The women are men of another complexion, but they are citizens for the state. They will participate in the duties of citizens, they will go to the wars. "They will abandon their garments, since virtue will stand them in their stead." Plato is irritated at those who make merry at the spectacle of naked women, "who exercise their bodies for a good object." The philosopher cites these words of Pindar : "He gathers the fruits of wisdom out of season." After the community of labor, Plato broaches the community of women. "The wives of our warriors, or rather our female warriors, will be common to all ; for none of the one will live with any one of the other in particular ; the parents will not know their children. This community will produce a universal family. As they will possess nothing individually, as all must be in common to them, houses, dining and bathing rooms, they will always be together." Now male and female being thus mingled like the waves of the sea, will be united in one joyful and fruitful marriage. It is the unity of love. Besides, all of free volition ; violence is banished from the republic. Venus will give her girdle, but no one will tear off the

girdle of Venus. One will receive the other with rapture, with the solemnity of a patriotic duty. It is the ideal harmony of dreamers, who hear naught but the benedictions of earth to heaven. "Pains and pleasures will be in common. The reason that a state becomes divided, is because joy and sorrow are individually experienced therein ; now, suppose all the citizens equally affected by joy or sorrow, and we have the state in perfect harmony. When we receive any wound on the finger, the mind in consequence of the intimate union between it and the body, is instantly informed. Now let good or evil happen to a citizen, the entire state will participate therein, as if self conscious of it, for the state is the soul ; it will rejoice or be afflicted with the members." It was possible, it was sublime in the republic of Plato, which scarce reckoned some thousands of men ; but in republics of millions, this image is no longer just. In the republics of Greece, all knew one another, as in a large family or in some retired corners of the provinces. The custom of living together, brings hearts near to one another ; one may therefore say that the state, that is everybody, will be thrilled with joy or grief at every isolated instance of happiness or sorrow ; but in a republic like ours, intimate unity will never be very firmly established. A man may weep at Beziers for the death of his wife, without having the city of Saint-Omer purchase a mourning robe. Because the winter will be severe

at Calais, must the people of Vaucluse be sad when spring will shine upon them? We must none the less for this recognise the great heart and great genius of Plato.

Plato, who has already expressed his sympathy for those who are beautiful, because he is of those who say, "The beautiful contains the good," is full of solicitude about the generations who are to cover the surface of the world. Love is not a forbidden fruit in the paradise of his republic, but he summons under the tree, only those youths and maidens, whose beauty Phidias and Praxiteles would have wished to immortalize in marble. The women will be mothers, but during twenty happy seasons, after they arrive at the age of twenty; men will not be admitted to marriage until thirty; Plato admits their virility up to the age of fifty-five. "But if it should happen that any one either under or over this age, should bestow children on the republic, we will declare him guilty of injustice and sacrilege, we will say that his child is a work of the tomb, since its birth will have been preceded, by neither the prayers nor sacrifices which the priests and priestesses offer to the gods for the prosperity of marriages." Whoever, however, will restrain himself within the limits of the prescribed age, may *marry* when he pleases, with whomsoever he may see fit, and as many times as love shall bid him. All alliances between citizens of the same family is forbidden, except between

brothers and sisters, when the oracle of Apollo shall so decide. "But," you will say, "how is this, since the children know neither their fathers nor mothers, like to the waves of the ocean, which know not from what mountain-top the rivers have brought them?" Plato has foreseen everything: the republic, which is the true mother, will recognise their true origin, and detach the limbs of the tree to plant them in the forest. There will be in each city, but one nursery for all the children. Those who grow up hardy, will be the hope of the state, those who are sickly and deformed, will be banished. "They will be concealed as is proper, in some secret place, which it will be forbidden to reveal or seek for. It is the sole means of preserving the purity of the races of gold or of silver. The mothers will be taken to the nursery, as soon as the milk begins to flow; care will be taken that none of them recognise a child."

Plato, who had no children, was not worthy to found a republic. If he had seen under his roof the mother smile on the new-born child, forgetting, in her hope, all the pains of her labor; if he had seen the child cling lovingly to the lap and the bosom of the mother, he would have understood that she who had for nine months borne her hope, was not, at the end of nine months, to offer her bosom flowing with milk to strange lips. What also led Plato to the community of property, was, that he wished in his republic neither poverty nor riches — because both give birth

to the love of novelty; the one by the desire of doing ill, the other by idleness. Now, the love of novelty engenders revolutions. "And besides, as wealth is the mother of effeminacy and idleness, so is poverty of baseness." The poor man may by labor become rich. Plato, in the name of labor, does not wish this. "Will the potter, when he has become rich, trouble himself about his trade? He will become more and more negligent and idle from day to day. On the other hand, because he has become rich, his neighbor will have become poor; he will no longer have the means of replacing his tools; his work will suffer; the laborers he will instruct will be less skilful." Plato is neither a philosopher nor a poet in desiring neither riches nor poverty. Humanity is not a herd living by the same appetites. God has not driven them before him like a rude herdsman, who seeks only green pasture. God has created the gamut of the passions for the human heart. God knows all the bitterness, but also all the sweetness of tears. Some there are more beautiful than pearls and diamonds. He has chosen that there should be rich and poor. Evil is anterior to good. Justice is born from injustice. Besides, if there were no rich, every one would be poor, except at Sparta. Wealth is a stream which flows from the mountains, watering and fertilizing all that it touches in its descent. Cast down the mountains, make the earth a level, and the river would no longer flow.

And yet, property impoverishes human destiny. If he possessed nothing, man would be truly rich. Does not the wrestler go to the combat naked? Instead of fixing his eyes on a field which has swallowed up all his strength, which he has watered with his sweat and his tears—a field ravaged by the leprosy of tax and mortgage—a field which he will have seen sold before his death on execution, or even by his son; he will look at the heaven and the earth, the mountains and the forests, the stars of the firmament, and the flowers of the valley, saying at the same time: “I have my part in all these wonders: I have my place at this show and at this festival.”

But let us leave the poor, as well as the rich, his portion of the globe, since it is his own conquest or that of his sire. Let us leave him that painful rock which he rolls ceaselessly like Sisyphus.

Everything is in Plato: all the political systems, all ancient and modern philosophy, Christianity and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Socrates and Malebranche, Fenelon and Babeuf. Where is the modern dreamer who has not walked an hour with Plato on Cape Sunium? It is the living spring which falls in a cascade from the heights of the Alps, and flows eternally through old Europe.

Plato is a communist: it is impossible to deny it. He thought—as did, at a later date, Spence and Babeuf—that the earth was the farm of the people as the sky was their light. God, in sending us on

the earth, has bestowed on us only its fruits. The Savior, the Son of God, was born in a stable. Let those who are born in a stable find their corner of the earth at the hour of labor; and, in fine, "let not the rich join land to land until there be no place left for the poor," as the Scripture hath said.

But have not the communists, whatever be their banner, taken too seriously these dreams of Plato who did not believe in his republic, or who built it only for a corner of Greece? At the present day the world is formed—the world is old. If you say that the world is eternally young like life, like nature, you will be answered, that every cradle is stained by *original sin*—that every infant has sucked in his mother's milk the ardent thirst of possession—that the whole of life is condensed for him in these words, *to have*, even beyond the tomb, since he still holds to the six feet of earth in which his bones are laid.

VII.

THE RACES OF GOLD, SILVER, AND IRON.

PLATO has scarcely banished the poets and their fables, ere he turns poet and gives us a fable himself. It is, at the same time, plain that he is not accustomed to fiction, and that he blushes to commit himself to it, even to symbolize the truth. "I do not know where to find the boldness and the expressions

of which I have need, to try and persuade the magistrates and the warriors, and afterward the rest of the citizens, that they have only received in a dream the education which we have given them, that in reality they have been formed and educated in the bosom of the earth, themselves, their souls, and all which belongs to them; that, after having formed them, the earth, their mother, has brought them out to the face of day; that they should, therefore, regard the earth on which they dwell as their mother and their nurse, defend her against whosoever may seek to attack, and treat other citizens as their brothers, come like themselves from the same womb. But, since I have commenced, hear the rest. You are all brothers, I should say to them, but the God who made you has caused gold to enter into the composition of those among you who are fitted for governing the rest. Such, therefore, are the most precious. He has mingled silver in the composition of warriors, iron and brass in that of laborers and other artisans. Since you have all a common origin, you will generally have children like yourselves. But it may happen that a citizen of the race of gold may have a son of the race of silver—that another of the race of silver may bring into the world a son of the race of gold—and that the same thing may happen in respect to other races. Now, this God especially commands the magistrates to keep watch, above everything else, as to the metal of which the

soul of each child is composed. And if their own children have any mixture of iron or brass, he does not wish them to pass it over, but that they should place them in the condition befitting them, whether that of artisan or laborer. He also wills, that if any of these latter have children containing gold or silver, that they should be elevated, the latter to the rank of warriors, the former to the dignity of magistrates: because there is an oracle which says that the republic will perish when it shall be governed by iron or brass. Do you know any means of intimating to them that this fable is a truth?"

Yes, there will always be three races of men—those who will live by the pure ray of intelligence; those who will live in the doubtful daylight of truth; and finally, those who will be best satisfied with night. But these races of gold, of silver, and iron, will spring from the same source without distinction of origin.

VIII.

HEAVEN AND EARTH.

PLATO, after having shown that we must flee from the pleasures of the unjust and accept the sorrows of the just, goes on to establish his state: "In a republic, everything depends on the commencement. If well commenced, it goes on continually increasing like a circle." He desires that men should watch

religiously over the education of children—the children who gayly bear the future in their hearts. After having forced the poets “to offer in their verses a model of good manners, or not to write any at all,” he asks himself if it is not necessary, also, “to have an eye on all the other artists, and restrain them from giving us, either in painting or in architecture, or in any other form, works void of grace, majesty, and proportion. As to those who can not do otherwise, shall we not forbid them to work among us, in the fear lest the guardians of our republic—educated in the midst of these vicious images, as in bad pasturages, and, so to speak, feeding every day on the sight of these things—should, in the end, contract some great vice in the soul without being sensible of it? We must, on the contrary, seek for able artists, capable of following closely the nature of the beautiful and the graceful, in order that our young people, educated among their works as in a pure and healthful atmosphere, may constantly receive salutary impressions through the eye and the ear, that everything should insensibly lead them from infancy to imitate and love the beautiful, and establish between it and themselves a perfect harmony. Is it not also for this reason, my dear Glaucon, that music is the principal part of education, because number and harmony, early insinuating themselves into the soul, take possession of it, and bring in their train grace and beauty, when this part of education is

given as it should be given, instead of the contrary happening when it is neglected? The most beautiful sight for him who could contemplate it, would be that of a soul and body, equally beautiful, united in themselves, and in which all the virtues should be found in perfect harmony. But that which is very beautiful is also very lovely. He who is truly a musician would not, therefore, be able to restrain himself from loving those in whom he should meet this harmony."

This page is a sublime one. The whole history of the conflict between the spirit and the flesh, the soul and the body, heaven and earth, is palpitating there. Plato himself wished to confound by the laws of harmony, these two forces always in conflict. He did not say, like Moses, "take heed to your eyes:" he did not say, like Job, "I have made a covenant with my eyes that I should not look upon a maid:" he did not say, as at a later period did Bossuet, resounding echo of the fathers of the church, "Wo to the earth! wo to the earth once again! wo to the earth whence issues so thick a smoke, such black vapors, which rise from these dark passions which hide from us the light and the firmament." He invoked, with ardor, the ravishing betrothal of the soul and the body.

IX.

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO AN IDEAL REPUBLIC.

PLATO did not believe any more in his republic than old Homer did in his gods.

"Do you believe," says he, in his fifth book, "that a painter would be any the less great, if, after having painted the most beautiful model of a man that could be imagined, and given to every feature its finest touch, he should be incapable of proving that nature could produce a like man?" Plato is therefore the painter of the ideal.

However, as everything is possible in this world, whose destinies set at naught all calculations, why should we not believe in the realization of the impossible republic? Heraclitus fancied that the sun was extinguished every night, and relighted every morning. Heraclitus was not treated as a madman, because he spoke of visible appearances: why should we deny the world which Plato created in his mind beyond the visible horizon? When he has resolved that it was necessary to have in his state a king-philosopher or a philosopher-king, he maintains that there has been, is, and will be a republic like his own. "If it has happened in the course of ages, if a true philosopher has been able to take in hand at some former time, the helm of state, or if it is taking place now in some country, which distance conceals from

our eyes, or if in fine, this is to happen some day, we are ready to maintain that there has been, is or will be a state, such as ours, when the muse of philosophy shall there possess the supreme authority."

Philosophy is the queen of intelligences; the republic of Plato is therefore, under this point of view, the sovereignty of the intelligence.

In the ninth book, Plato believes that, if he has seen anywhere the model of his republic, it has been in turning his soul like a pure mirror toward heaven. "Besides, it makes little matter," says he with the haughty disdain of creative genius, "it makes little matter whether this state exists or is to exist some day; this much is certain, that a sage will never consent to govern any other than such a one."

X.

THE SOVEREIGNTY AND IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

PLATO, while recognising the harmonious union of the body and the soul, proclaims the sovereignty of the soul. "The inner man should hold sway over the outer: the human or rather divine portion should rule the animal, for the latter is a many-headed monster." The philosopher sees all the violent passions surging in the body, as voluptuousness, a monster whose gaping mouth ingulfs all the bloom of virtue. It is necessary to cajole these like lions, put them to sleep and kill them in their torpor, if we are

afraid of them when excited. "Let us imitate the wise husbandman who exterminates the wild beasts but nourishes and trains the domestic animals." Plato must be told, however, that it is necessary to combat, not kill the passions; for how often have genius, courage, and heroism, burst forth in the tempest of passions, even of bad passions. Let us take care that the brutal and ferocious passions become gentle and tractable.

And after having thus built his temple of marble, gold, stone, and brass—a monument of grand though irregular appearance, Plato inscribes these majestic words on its pediment, as if God himself had guided his hand : IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

And in reality, it is not sufficient to have built an immortal edifice, destined to shelter perishable creatures, it is necessary to make known that beyond this edifice, higher than the angle of the pediment, higher than the cloud that floats over it, higher than the sun which sheds over it his golden rays, that there is a God—a God who has taken our soul into his own, who has poured upon us his love from his bosom, like the pelican that gives its life to its offspring, in giving them its blood; God, who is all warmth and light, eternal source of life and love, of the beautiful and the good, of intelligence and virtue.

How shall this God be worshipped? Plato invokes God himself, to command or inspire the solemnities of his worship. "Let us leave to the Delphian
VOL. I.—8

Apollo, the charge of making the greatest and best laws of the republic, those which concern the construction of temples, the sacrifices, the worship of the gods, genii, and heroes, the funeral rites and the ceremonies which appease the disconsolate manes. Where we found the republic, it will not be wise for us to apply to other men, or consult other interpreters than the men and interpreters of the country. Now the god of Delphos, is in religious matters our natural interpreter, since he has chosen the *navel* of the earth to issue thence his oracles.*

Our soul, says Plato, is immortal. The ophthalmia is the malady of the eyes; sickness, that of the body; mildew, that of the wheat; rust, that of iron. Everything visible, carries in itself a principle of corruption, which gradually destroys it; but the soul is a fire which gradually nundergoes all the attacks of invisible evil, without perishing thereby, because it is of celestial origin and the bad passions of earth exhaust themselves upon it. To know the soul well, its origin and destinies, it must be regarded with spiritual eyes, not in its well of darkness, but as the radiant truth that sits naked on the margin of the well. It is only thus that we discern its aspirations toward all that is divine and imperishable. "We shall conjecture what it becomes, when it abandons itself with fervor to this sublime course toward

* The ancients believed that Delphos was placed in the centre of the earth. Æschylus says so in his *Eumenides*.

heaven, when it springs with a noble effort from the depth of this foaming sea in which it is plunged, when it frees itself from the pebbles and shells which attach themselves to it, from the necessity which it is under of feeding on terrestrial things." Although of celestial origin, although destined to behold again its country, the soul according to Plato, sometimes presents itself before the judges, defiled by the flames of impure fire. He avails himself of the recital of Her, the Armenian, to point out the recompense of the soul of the just, and the punishment of the soul of the unjust: the first, like an amorous bird of the azure skies, wings its flight in all the paths of heaven, the second is condemned to darkness. As at a later period was the Wandering Jew, they were condemned to the dust of the roads. Between heaven and earth, according to the Armenian, there is a point of meeting to which the just and unjust resort, after a journey of a thousand years, to talk of paradise and hell. "It is a field where they salute one another, and seek intelligence of what has passed in heaven or under the earth. The one relates the adventures with groans and tears, excited by the recollection of their own sufferings or the sight of the sufferings of others, the others tell of all the joys, delights, wonders and enchantments of heaven." It will be seen that the Greeks had found out heaven and hell. It is the same picture, only the painter is

more or less of a colorist. It is the same idea and the same poetry in different words.

In the meantime, after having travelled amid all the enchantments of the kingdom, or the republic, of heaven—the souls of the just purified by the breezes and the warmth of heaven, must recommence another career and re-enter a mortal body. The spirit will not choose for them, but each select for himself. The first soul designated by lot, will choose its place in the world. “Her has seen Orpheus choose that of the swan,” in hatred to women, who had formerly caused his death, “as he does not wish to own his birth to any of them.” The soul of Tamyris had chosen that of a nightingale, the swans and nightingales having to undergo the perils of human existence. “I wish to be a lion,” says the soul of Ajax, “for I remember too well the affront I underwent, in the judgment of the arms of Achilles.”—“I would be an eagle,” says Agamemnon. The soul of Atalanta wishes to become a wrestler. That of Epens, who built the wooden horse, chose to spin wool like Penelope and Lucretia. Thersites took the body of an ape, faithful to his buffoonish instincts. Ulysses, the most wise, sought in a corner of the world, far from court, the rank of the most obscure and simple peasant, for Ulysses had again learned prudence while above.

Plato has ended his book with these words: “We will always walk in the celestial road, we will devote

ourselves with all our strength to the practice of wisdom and justice. In peace with ourselves and with the gods, after having won on earth the palm of virtue, like victorious athletes, who are led in triumphs we shall be again crowned on high, to accomplish with all the joys of eternity, this journey of a thousand years in paths of enchantment."

I close this beautiful book with an emotion of sadness. Why have we not lived—not in the republic of Plato—but in that splendid age, when the gods had transported Olympus to Athens! Since Plato, the world has grown old, but it has not advanced. Since Plato died, night has fallen from his tomb. Thrice has light again dawned on the earth, with the Christian era, the Renaissance, and with 1793. This last dawn promised a radiant sun, but when will the sun rise?

XI.

THE REPUBLICAN ASPASIA.

PLATO, however, preserved for his posterity, the beautiful style and patriotic ideas of Aspasia.* Aspasia, who must be counted among the great personages of the age of Pericles, has written, among other nervous passages: "Republics are the nurses of men. The good produce the good; the bad the bad. Ours has for its basis, the *equality* of our

* Eulogy of the warriors slain in the Peloponnesian war, composed by Aspasia.

origin; the authority is in the hands of the people, who intrust the power to the most worthy. Weakness, poverty, origin, however obscure, are no causes of exclusion, but the opposite advantages do not conduct to honors.

“Our republic is the unanimous harmony of all orders of citizens. The other cities are composed of unequal classes of every description; their administration is consequently unequal; it is tyrannical or oligarchical. Among the men who inhabit them, some are masters, some slaves, as for us, who are *brothers*, and born of a common mother, we know not these odious distinctions. Equality of origin submits us to the same laws, and elevates us to the same rights. Intelligence and virtue alone, are our titles to power. For *liberty*, we are resolved to fight against the Greeks themselves.”

Now do you think that Aspasia, who proclaimed LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY, before Plato, and before Christianity, that Aspasia who would have governed the known world, had not a soul capable of soaring in the ethereal paths of Plato? What did she, the impure courtesan, say to Socrates in love?

“Imbue thyself with a sacred enthusiasm, raise thy mind to the divine heights of poetry, open the doors of thy soul to the ideal light; it is in the path of heaven that we should lead those whom we love.”

Plato was neither a lover nor a disciple of Aspasia; it is perhaps to be regretted. If the republic of

Aspasia was open to me, I should enter it most gladly, even if Plato did not banish me from his.

Since Aspasia has been dead, do you believe that humanity has advanced? Is there a new word to add to the language of the passions or the ideas? With Plato, the golden chain of human destiny was broken: has Christianity had aught else to do than rejoin it?

MADemoisELLE GAUSSIN.

MADemoisELLE GAUSSIN could not boast of her escutcheon, like mademoiselle de Carmargo, who used to spread out her petticoats, exclaiming: "Thirty-six quarterings!" Here, in a word, is the history of the birth of Mademoiselle Gaussin:—

The comedian Baron, had a carriage and a château. He had brought from his château, to drive his coach, a big rogue of a Burgundian, with a high color, and as gay and cheerful as a hill-side in Chambertin; you could scent the bouquet of his wine within twenty paces of him.

This great rogue of a coachman, when he found himself upon a gilded throne, guiding a couple of roadsters, caparisoned like a pair of blood horses, took it into his head to make love to all the Margots of the neighborhood.

As the rogue had, to some degree, the attractions of a gallant cavalier, he turned the heads of a whole phalanx of kitchen-maids.

Baron never once got into his coach, whatever might be the hour, when going to the theatre, or returning from it, without finding near his horses, some sentimental washer of pots, in an elegiac colloquy with his rogue of a coachman. "What is the vagabond about?" Baron used to say. "Study human passion in Corneille, in Molière, and in Racine! You will not in the end know as much of it, as a coachman and a kitchen-maid who give each other a single kiss."

The high deeds of this coachman, spread far and near; they were much talked about at the Comédie-Française, for there was not one of the young ladies there, whose servant-maid was not dead in love with this Burgundian Don Juan.

One evening, Mlle. Leconvreur, approached Baron mysteriously, and said to him: "I have to demand satisfaction from you: my kitchen-maid, a woman of Roman virtue, has been seduced by your coachman, who threatens to abandon her with her child, for the poor girl will be soon put to bed. I give you due notice, that if you do not force Antoine to marry Jeanne, I will oblige you to acknowledge the child."

"Make me acknowledge the child!" exclaimed Baron laughing. "I have never signed my own works, I do not wish to claim those of others; but since this rogue has been guilty, he must expiate his crime. Moreover, there is no need of telling him,

that when the wine is poured out we must drink it." "There are no persons equal to the actors," said Mademoiselle Lecouvreur, "to make virtue respected : the theatre is the school of morals. To crown the work, Baron, you must be godfather of the child."—"And you, godmother," replied Baron.

Such was the origin of Mademoiselle Gaussin. The name of Baron's coachman, was Antoine Gaussin, that of Mademoiselle Lecouvreur's kitchen-maid was Jeanne Pollet; Mademoiselle Gaussin's Christian names were Jeanne-Catherine-Marie-Madeleine. That of Madeleine, she added herself at a later day, because she wished to love much.

Tableaux vivants or *tableaux parlants*, are not, it is well known, a modern invention; the courtesans of pagan antiquity, had learned, in the studios of the painters and sculptors, to represent the banquets and festivals of Olympus. They were to be seen in the public places of Athens and Sicyon, under the form of Venus or Diana, the Hours or the Graces, vying with the works of the painters and sculptors. Among the ancient Hebrews, were not such living symbols to be seen, at the court of David and Solomon? When the queen of Sheba went to Jerusalem, she had a whole phalanx of young girls, dressed in the style of the time, who represented before Solomon, the visions of the queen of Sheba.

Mademoiselle Gaussin revealed herself in the *tableaux anacreontiques*; there was so much expression

in her eyes and mouth, she possessed to so high a degree, the art of contrast and shade, she had such an adorable grace, in inclining her head, placing her foot, raising her hand, in binding and unloosing her hair, which flowed like golden waves upon the undulating marble of her bust, or the empurpled snow of her bosom, that the amazed spectators, beheld in her, Venus, Juno, Diana, Daphne, Terpsichore — and never Madeleine Gaussin.

It was thus that she said, upon being reproached for her representations in dresses, that were somewhat low-necked, *that she had never exhibited herself in public.*

She passed entirely with full devotion into the character she represented.

When Mademoiselle Rachel plays *Hermione*, who thinks of Mademoiselle Rachel? The actress disappears in the raging woman, more jealous than a panther. Thus, Mademoiselle Gaussin veiled her nudity, in exhibiting to the spectator the proud bust of Juno, the amorous bosom of Venus, and the chaste expression of Diana.

The cardinal de Bernis, who was a good judge, not exactly in his quality of cardinal, wrote one day, on his breviary, in the presence of madame de Pompadour, these two lines :—

“Of being nude, th’ embarrassment
Gives nudity its greatest charm.”

Mademoiselle Gaussin, did not offer that kind of attraction to the public ; she was like the Susannah by Santerre, who in concealing herself from the elders, exposes herself to the spectator. In the picture, as Diderot remarked, Susannah is chaste, she does not know that the public is looking at her. So Mademoiselle Gaussin concealed herself, in her metamorphosis.

D'Auberval, in his closing discourse, that he addressed to the public, in 1763, recalled the *tableaux Anacreontiques* of Mademoiselle Gaussin. "Her eyes," says he emphatically, "spoke to the soul: love seemed to have created her, in order to prove that voluptuousness has no adornment more piquant than artlessness."

She commenced, as was usual in her day, with going the rounds of the provinces ; history does not record what she did with her heart during these wanderings, in the spring-time of her life. She did not meet, like Mademoiselle Clairon, with any indiscreet lover, to publish her early adventures.

Actresses do not make the tour of the country, without tearing their linen robe among the bushes ; but as, after all, Mademoiselle Gaussin, is not one of the saints in the calendar, I am not obliged to make an apology for her virtues. But this is beyond doubt, that on the 28th of April, 1731, when she made her debut at the Comédie-Française, she knew thoroughly the science of the heart. She had been

in the school of sentiment, of jealousy, of rage : in her acting, she sounded the gamut of all the passions.

She passed through the infinite joys, the unspeakable tenderness, the wild grief of love. No one on the stage was more varied, more capricious and more profound, more sportive, and more reflective ; she gushed forth into gayety, and she melted into tears.

It may be said without hyperbole, that for ten years all Paris was in love with her : the people of the court, the church, citizens, and the limbs of the law, the men of the sword and the men of the pen, allowed themselves to be captivated by her diffusive and vibrating sensibility.

Monsieur de Voltaire, even, enrolled himself upon the first page of the golden book of Madeleine Gaussin ; he gave her the part of *Zaïre*, which was one of his best conceptions.

After the representation, Voltaire wrote an epistle, as follows, to the tragic actress :—

“Gaussin, receive this gift of mine—

Receive the lines success has crowned ;

Protect them ; for *Zaïre* is thine,

Since thou hast made the work renowned.”

I will not quote the whole of this epistle. Those madrigals are well known which come, not of poetry, but of wit. Voltaire wrote it upon some impatient knees, in the free and easy style of the graces of his day.

After *Zaïre*, it was *Alzire*—Second edition, revised, corrected, and enlarged by the madrigal:—

“ ’Twas not to me they homage paid;
You won their love and praise from them,
Charming *Alzire*; you too condemn
The converts that Don Guzman made.”

Not unto me belongs the praise! If Voltaire had been told that this was from the gospel? He who writes for the stage may always ask the actor, when the actor gives the author his whole soul, to sign the piece, unless he who writes is a Molière.

It was especially in the part of Ines, in the celebrated tragedy of *La Motte* that Voltaire wished to put into verse, that Mademoiselle Gaussin revealed the impassioned and expressive poetry of her acting. The celebrated line will be recollected:—

“ All Paris, for Ines, had the eyes of Don Pedro.”

Madeline Gaussin having been painted by Tournières in this affecting part, *La Motte* had it inscribed upon the frame in letters of gold.

At her debuts, she was pursued by all that remained of the *roués* of the regency, Richelieu, who had paraphrased the line of Boileau:—

“ Woman is but a slave, made only to obey.”

Richelieu, accustomed to conquest on a loftier stage, was very much surprised and very much irritated to see the door of Mademoiselle Gaussin closed before him. He swore that he would avenge himself upon some woman of the court.

Now, why was the door of Mademoiselle Gaussin closed to this hero of the bedchamber, who never gained any battles except with Master Cupid?

It was because Madeleine Gaussin was a woman of heart, who had only one lover at a time. Now, who was it that defended the place when the *maréchal de Richelieu* laid siege to it? A brave fellow by the name of Bagnolé, who had not a *sou*, but who could get the better of the *maréchal* in an affair of the heart.

This is the whole story:—

One morning, her chambermaid brought to her, while in bed engaged with her chocolate and her novel, a letter written in this fine style:—

“**MADemoisELLE:** I am a poor student at law, whom your eyes have ruined for ever. I must cast myself at your feet and die there of love. I saw you last night in *Zaïre*! You are so beautiful that I did not understand a single word. I have passed the night in prowling under your window, without taking note of the weather. For Heaven’s sake, let me live or let me die. Your lacquey would not admit me. I do not wish to dance attendance upon you. Order me to be admitted to you. In beholding me, so foolish or so sublime in my madness, you will either burst into tears or into a laugh, my life or death.

“**BAGNOLE.**”

Mademoiselle Gaussin read this letter over three times. “He is a madman!” said she. And she rang

the bell. "Jacquelinette!"—"Mademoiselle?"—"What is the meaning of all this?"

Jacquelinette burst out a-laughing. "Ah! mademoiselle, he would make you turn your head, but on the wrong side."—"He is ugly, then?"—"Oh no, as to that! but he has a strange look—it is enough to make one die a-laughing. He has been here already three or four times, as if we got up with the sun."—"His letter is very pretty."—"If he should return, what shall I say to him?"—"Tell him to write me some more letters."

Bagnolé returned. He might knock his hardest at the door—he did not get in.

He guarded the door like a sentinel in order to take the actress by surprise as she went out; but at noon, as she did not make her appearance, he betook himself to the café Procope to write a second letter to her.

While he was writing, she went out. On that day she acted in *L'Oracle*. During the interval, while she was receiving bouquets and compliments in the green-room, Bagnolé, more excited than he was on the evening before, ran to her and threw himself at her feet, after having overturned Pont de Vesle in his passage.

There were twenty-five persons in the green-room. Absorbed by his passion, he beheld only Madeleine Gaussin; and kneeling, said to her, with a voice full of emotion: "I love you, and I will tell you so

everywhere." Mademoiselle tried to escape from him, but he held her by the arm.

A young man, the marquis d'Imécourt, addressed him sharply and tried to separate him by force from the actress. But Bagnolé held on.

Mademoiselle Gaussin, angry as she was with this mode of conducting one's self—or, rather, with this mode of making love—had, nevertheless, scrutinized the face of the young law-student. His face was beautiful, very pale and very expressive—a soul animated it. The flower of youth and poetry spread a halo around it. "Do you observe what a charming face he has?" remarked the actress to the marquis d'Imécourt, who was her lover of the day before. "By heavens!" he replied, "I'll wash my hands of him." And he released Bagnolé.

At that moment, the soldiers of the guard at the Comédie-Française came up to seize him. He allowed himself, beneath the penetrating charm of a tender glance from Mademoiselle Gaussin, to be conducted, as if he were a drunken person, to the guard-house of the Luxembourg. He asked for his father; he was an innkeeper at *La Râpée*. Thinking his son was mad, or that he had a disposition for the follies of the prodigal son, he had him taken by force to St. Lazare.

But, the next day, the amorous youth escaped by a window and hurried to the Comédie-Française. He waited this time until Mademoiselle Gaussin

passed. When she alighted from her phaeton, he threw himself again at her feet. "I wished to see you again," he exclaimed passionately: and showing her a poniard—"Do not be impatient, all will be soon over."—"You are a child!" said she, grasping his hand—to take the poniard from him. "Arise and do not die. I am not so cruel as that. If I must love you—well, I will love you!"

The poor Bagnolé experienced so unexpected a joy in hearing those words—or rather that sweet voice, which had become tender for his sake—that he fell, fainting, to the ground.

Madeleine Gaussin called her lacquey, while she raised the head of Bagnolé.

The lacquey took him in his arms and carried him to the café Procope, where mademoiselle Gaussin herself followed.

Piron and Boissy were there. A group gathered about the actress, who related, with all her artless simplicity, the folly of the law-student.

Piron, who had never as yet been in love, approached the young man, and saluted him with respect. "The folks of the academy," said he to Boissy, "saluted wisdom, which is sterile: I do as Erasmus—I salute folly, which goes whither the heart leads it."

Bagnolé, who had come to, opened his eyes, moist with joy, upon Mademoiselle Gaussin, who had kindly bent over him.

"I," said Boissy, "salute passion when it is so strong and so candid."—"And I," said mademoiselle Gaussin, "will give to so much folly and so much passion, my folly and my passion."

Bagnolé arose; he cast a jealous look around, and seemed to ask of the actress if they were not going elsewhere to partake of the honey-moon. "Evil be to him who evil thinks!" said Madeleine Gaussin.

She went out, followed closely by Bagnolé, to her phaeton. "Get in!" said she to the amorous youth.

He had the sense not to ask where they were going. Did they know where they were going? But at the theatre, when it was announced that Madeleine Gaussin, "suddenly indisposed," would not appear that night in the part of Lucinde in *L'Oracle*, the audience, naturally roguishly inclined, exclaimed: "Bagnolé! Bagnolé!"

Mademoiselle Gaussin returned—they always return! She returned alone; as occurs often when two set out together. Moreover, Mademoiselle Gaussin did not wish to assume the airs of a sentimental Phillis: she wanted the whole world to love her, but she was somewhat fearful of the sublime ridiculousness of loving any one. As for Bagnolé, he was still enveloped in all the flames of passion: but he had, in a few days, been forced to submit to so many caprices, that he had bid La Gaussin farewell without much regret, calculating upon consoling himself elsewhere, with some other girl in the Latin quarter, without any stage-play.

In spite of her caprices as a stage-queen, Mademoiselle Gaussin had a way of living very much at her ease. "I have no prejudices," she used to say; which meant: "I turn with the wind; I love when in the humor, I obey only my own folly, and I laugh at the prudence of others." She preferred a golden girdle to a good reputation. A girdle? did she ever find time to tie it? As for her reputation, hers was the worst on the stage. The pit vindicated outraged morality, by giving her an occasional hint. On the first representation of a comedy by Destouches, the *Force du naturel*, at this line:—

"I believe she will never say, nay."

which indicated the character of the part she was playing, the whole house burst out a laughing. Mademoiselle Gaussin sustained her very tottering virtues by a great deal of wit and originality. She ennobled, if I may be allowed to say so, her courtesan airs, by some touches of true passion, and by a noble disinterestedness. Take one story out of a thousand: she loved Helvetius for his beauty and his renown; one night in the green-room, during an interlude, Helvetius was then at her side, discussing some point or other of transcendental philosophy; a financier, an old roué of the regency, very ugly but very rich, approached Mademoiselle Gaussin, and offered her without further preliminaries, a hundred pistoles if she would go sup with

him. "Turcaret, my friend," replied Mademoiselle Gaussin, with a loud voice, and with an impertinent toss of the head; "I will give you two hundred pistoles, if you will come to sup with me with that face there." And she pointed to Helvetius as she said so.

A great deal has been said about the beauty of Mademoiselle Gaussin. See how Mademoiselle Clairon has painted her: "Mademoiselle Gaussin had a most beautiful head, a most touching voice; her *ensemble* was noble, all her movements had a child-like grace which it was impossible to resist, nor did she resist it either; but she was always Mademoiselle Gaussin. *Zaire* and *Rodogune* were cast in the same mould; age, condition, situation, scene, all were of the same form." Mademoiselle Clairon says, moreover, that Mademoiselle Gaussin had but a vague instinct of the dramatic art, that she had not, as she herself had, an intelligent and impassioned sentiment. She denies her outright the power of forming a true conception of a dramatic piece, whether tragedy or comedy. Mademoiselle Clairon appears to me to be joking. This right of judgment, who has it? Time, and even then! Monsieur de Voltaire judged Corneille at a distance of a hundred years; did he form any better judgment than the cardinal de Richelieu? Mademoiselle Clairon would have done better to have loved one hour longer, than to have exhibited her relative position.

There is in the green-room at the Comédie-Fran-

çaise, a portrait of Mademoiselle Gaussin—more or less authentic. It is a pretty woman with rouge and powder, painted by Nattier. She is draped like a vestal of the eighteenth century. She displays her delicate and white shoulders; she takes but little care to conceal her bosom.

All such beauty, all such brilliancy, all such glory, pass rapidly away, like everything that loves the sun. The green-room of the Comédie becomes depopulated about Mademoiselle Gaussin. The age has become a reasoning one; the lovers become philosophers. As for her, not knowing whither to turn, she sought wisdom—from curiosity. The example of Mademoiselle Gaussin, did not correct at a later day, Mademoiselle Guimard, who ended like her. Now, listen how Mademoiselle Gaussin ended :—

Marriage which had appeared to her, for fifty years like a prejudice, seemed to her all of a sudden the only plank of safety for eternity. She had so lively a desire to die with the benefit of the sacrament, “honored like all wives,” that not being able to unite herself to a more distinguished personage, she married an opera-dancer, she who had lived on familiar terms with dukes and philosophers, Richelieu or Helvetius! She became then Madame Toalaigo, as robust as one’s arm. But it was too late to be happy, and consequently have many children; The Sieur Toalaigo, jealous of the past, poor man! —I would say poor dancer!—beat her for all the

lovers she had had. Poor woman!—Vanity of vanities! she consoled herself somewhat, when Toalaigo purchased in Berri, the estate of Laszenoy, the name of which he assumed. But whatever his name was, his heart and head were always those of Toalaigo.

It is related, that during one season passed at this famous *château*, she met her dear Bagnolé, whom she had not wished to take time enough to love. Bagnolé had become a rustic philosopher; he hunted while meditating upon human troubles and vanities. “Ah? Bagnolé! Bagnolé!” exclaimed she, throwing herself into his arms, “it was you and not the others.”—“It is true,” said Bagnolé, growing pale, “but it is too late for you to rest upon a heart which no longer beats for you.”

She returned to her husband more desolate than ever. Toalaigo did her the favor of quitting her, for the other world. But what was left to her in this? A pair of eyes to behold the solitude, which surrounds those women who have lived too much in the crowd. She had but one part to take—that was to escape herself—which happened on the 6th June, 1767. Poor Gaussin! so much beauty, so many charms, so much genius! She who drove four horses to her coach, she who had been the adoration of all the prodigal sons of the generation of Voltaire, she died without having enough to leave a will, and what is still more sad, without a friend to cause her to regret that she had not wherewithal to make a will!

JACQUES CALLOT.

A CARNAVALESQUE EPIC.

I.

THE Nature in which we breathe is also our mother; our soul, most frequently, forms itself in her image. If we are painters or poets, if God has permitted us to reproduce or to sing of his works, it is the nature of our native land which forms our first inspiration. The soul of every man of genius is a mirror which he carries along his road. We may be astonished, at first, to find the cradle and the tomb of Callot amid the smiling scenery which encircles Nancy. Claude Lorraine it would suit right well! Was it there that Callot saw his captains, his braves, his sorcerers, his gipsies—the whole of that splendid gallery of the curiosities of human nature? In studying the life of Jacques Callot from his infancy, I shall discover, I am sure, the happy chance to which he owed his genius.

If you wish to look on, with me, at the curious infancy of Callot—rebuild, according to the fancy

of your historical recollections, at Nancy, near the old hotel de **Marque**, a mansion of somewhat lofty front, ornamented at the door and casements with carvings which have suffered from exposure to the weather: between the two windows of the ground-floor is a stone bench for the use of beggars and pilgrims; on the first story above, two windows—that is to say, two stone crosses—forming each four apertures; on the second floor, two dormer-windows opening on the roof above the gutter—around these two windows, some moss, some tufts of grass, a little flower which the wind or a bird has planted there; at the summit of the roof, a single, very tall chimney, which is always smoking. At the two casements we may now and then see enframed the tender and anxious face of a mother, or the grave and dignified head of a father—the father and mother of **Callot**, **Jean Callot** and **Renée Brunehault**. At the two dormer-windows we can see a young and joyful family, in all the charms of freedom from care: among these children we shall recognise **Jacques Callot**, by his proud and inquisitive glance, which already rests on everything—on you and on me, as if he thought us worthy of his gallery.

If we enter the house, we shall find it furnished plainly, in harmony with the pale light which enters through the small, lozenge-shaped panes: chests of walnut, a faldstool, an ebony crucifix surmounted by the Easter palms, in which the spider has never any

VOL. I.—9

chance to spin his web; high-backed chairs of carved oak; gothic tables on twisted feet; a great chimney-piece, over which hangs a mirror with edges and frame highly decorated; on the mantel of the good old time, two silver goblets, of good form and height, produced in a time when people knew how to drink; between the windows a gothic clock; on the shelves a brilliant pewter vessel; pots of flowered earthenware; a handsome Bohemian glass. At the first glance, we discover Jean Callot, walking up and down the better to reflect, in velvet breeches, slashed and puffed—or Renée Bruneault, seated in the chimney-corner, busy with her distaff.

It was in this house that Jacques Callot entered the world in 1593. His family can be traced back to 1400—a year in which it was attached to the dukes of Burgundy. It is believed that the family is of Flemish origin. A Callot, secretary of Duke John, father of Charles the Bold, was surnamed the Liégeois. Claude Callot,* father of John and grand-

* Claude Callot, whose ancestors had been attached to the dukes of Burgundy, was ennobled by letters patent of Charles III., bearing date July 30, 1584, after having been an archer of his guards for twenty-two years. He had married Claude de Fricourt, grand-niece by her mother of the maid of Orleans. His son, John I., herald-at-arms of Lorraine, had by his wife, Renée Bruneault, daughter of the physician of the dowager duchess Christina of Denmark, among other children, Jacques Callot, engraver. The coat-of-arms of the family bore *Azure*, five stars *or*, saltire-wise. I have seen it, accompanied by the motto, *Scintillant ut astra*, which would appear very ambitious were it not justified by the celebrity of Jacques Callot."—*Des Maratz Eloge historique de Jacques Callot*.

sire of Jacques, was one of the valiant men-of-arms of his time. Charles III., duke of Lorraine, in order to properly recompense his bravery and loyal services, had ennobled him in a marked manner, as, at a later period, genius ennobled his grandson. The arms of Claude were brilliant and ambitious; the shield bore, azure five stars *or*, placed saltire-wise; for a crest, a mailed right-hand, componé *or* and azure, holding a battle-axe, the whole borne and supported by a helmet argent, covered by a mantle of the metals and colors of the shield. Claude inscribed on it the motto "*Scintillant ut astra.*" He had married a grand-niece of the maid of Orleans. Jean Callot, first herald-at-arms of Lorraine, married Renée Bruneault, daughter of the physician of the duchess Christina of Denmark. Renée was a good, simple-minded woman, made to be a mother; so she had eleven children. Jacques, the last of the boys, was her Benjamin. As she had the misfortune to lose her daughters, her love for Jacques became only the more tender. Jacques always remembered the generous milk and pious tears of his mother: he had always a good heart. Jean Callot—prouder of his title of herald-at-arms than the duke of Lorraine of his duchy—counted on his youngest son as his successor: his elder ones had already taken other paths; one entered the excise, the other became a lawyer. Jacques, when eight years old, learned to draw and color coats-of-arms under the eyes of his father.

The passion for drawing took such firm hold of him, that at school, when learning to write, he made a design out of each letter of the alphabet. The A was the gable of his father's house, the B their neighbor's weathercock, and so on with the other letters; his writing was therefore of the most curious description—an entire world might be discovered in it.

There had been painters in his mother's family: among others an uncle, a disciple of Holbein, who had become the head of a religious school in Holland. Renée Bruneault loved the arts: without wishing to do so, perhaps, she instilled a love of them into the last of her sons. She could not understand how a man could pass his whole life, like the solemn and austere Jean Callot, in carefully shaking off the dust from old coats-of-arms. As soon as she was alone with Jacques, she roused his young imagination by the simple narrative, interrupted by kisses, of the historical singularities of men of genius. The good woman was marvellously well acquainted with the curious chapters in the history of the old painters. I love to picture to myself the mother of Jacques Callot in the costume of Mary Stuart, ruff, laces, and fardingale, taking his hands in the chimney-corner, caressing his curls, smiling on him with a melancholy tenderness, and finally relating to him some marvel of art. Thereupon Jacques mounted to his room, trimmed his pen or pencil, and, without knowing what he was going to do, scattered

his lines right and left. When he had exhausted his enthusiasm, he leaned out of the window, crumbled the bread for the sparrows which he had not used in his drawings, reviewed in his memory all his mother's stories, and carried his glances along the streets or in the windows of the neighborhood. At his dormer-window he had a view of a charming landscape, surrounded by woods and mountains, dotted with clumps of trees and church-spires, variegated by patches of cultivated land. In rainy seasons he could follow, through the verdant meadows, the meanderings of the streamlet called the *Meurthe*. But Jacques cared little for the magnificent displays of nature—he was not one of those who are smitten with the magic of color at the sight of the splendid flames of the setting sun, penetrating the thick foliage, and losing itself in the blue heavens. What most struck him in nature was man. In his time, humanity had still a thousand distinct characters, the great tree a thousand separate grafts: either by chance or by the will of the Creator, then—more than now, perhaps—every man had the spirit and the dress of his calling in the mingled drama of smiles and tears which is performed here below. Jacques Callot, instead of studying the mysteries and grandeur of nature, studied, with a curiosity yet childish, all that he found strange, extravagant, and original. In a word, among the actors of life who played their parts before his eyes, those who most

charmed him were always gasconading soldiers—ballad-singers, opening their mouths larger than the wooden bowls they presented for charitable offerings—rope-dancers, rehearsing their pantomimes—beggars, in their picturesque rags—pilgrims, with their doublets slashed by time, enamelled, starred, furrowed with rosaries of boxwood, artificial flowers, leaden medals; in fine, with all the devotional marvels of *Notre Dame de Bon Secours*. In 1600, there were scarcely any other theatres in the provinces than those of the open air: those were, therefore, the palmy days of bear-leaders, fortune-telling gipsies, clowns, and harlequins dancing on a scaffolding on holydays. Jacques soon attempted to sketch, either in his chamber or in the open street, all the genuinely grotesque or buffoonish figures that he met with. He was seen, more than once, to seat himself uncereimoniously on the pavement—open his school-portfolio—take his paper, his pen or pencil—and, in the quietest manner, sketch some juggler with his cups, who seemed to be standing for him. Once, among other times, his father met him seated at the basin of a fountain of Nancy, his naked feet in the water, sketching, with unequalled enthusiasm, the great nose and mouth of a clown who was playing his tricks at a little distance.*

When Jacques failed of such sights, he still found

* Watteau, who has in painting the physiognomy of Callot is engraving, commenced in the same way.

something to employ his pencil. Had he not always before his eyes—sometimes severe and dignified to a ridiculous extent, sometimes illumined by Moselle wine—the face of his schoolmaster? And then, when tired of his lessons, it exactly suited him to play truant: he rushed into the first church he found open, and passed long hours in contemplation before the sculptures of the altars and tombs, the frescoes of the chapels, the gothic designs of the pointed windows, the religious pictures of the simple old masters. He went everywhere, where there was anything curious to be seen—into the churches, the monasteries, the hotels; even to the palace of the dukes of Lorraine. Thanks to his pretty face, half hidden in golden curls—thanks to the precious Flanders lace with which his mother trimmed his collar and cuffs—he was allowed to pass everywhere, youth is so beautiful and pleasant to see! Is not a child, playing, running, or smiling, a charming dream of the past?

One Sunday morning, on awaking, Jacques was attracted to his window by the sound of the fife and drum of a company of gipsies, who were putting up their booth before the hotel de Marque. The rays of a spring sun shed a cheerful and pleasant glow over the troop. Jacques, delighted with the sight, descended at first to the gutter to see more at his ease. He afterward abandoned the gutter for the chimney: it was like a place in a stage-box. There,

without saying a word—the eye fixed, mouth half open, ear pricked up—he witnessed, when the curtain was raised, all the preparations for the show. The decorations were taken out of a little wagon drawn by an ass, the said ass and said wagon being themselves player and decoration. They made the spangled cassocks, which had long since seen their best days, glitter with a sort of pomp in the sun. Three infants at the breast were set-down, helter-skelter, among the pasteboard lions and serpents, which served them for playthings. Jacques saw, in less than a quarter of an hour, so many things, natural and unnatural, issue from the chariot, that he fancied that the chief of the troop had the gift of creation. He was desirous, at all hazards, to descend to the stage. In reaching the street, he at first hung back; but soon, more and more astonished, he went as far as the side scene. To obtain pardon for such boldness, he offered one of the gipsies, the first who passed near him, a sprig of wild-gillyflower which he had just gathered on the roof of the paternal mansion. “By my holy bowl,” said the gipsy, smelling the flower, “he is a pretty boy. Do not blush, my child. Is it your mother who has adorned you with those pretty laces? She may well kiss those locks. Let us see—don’t be afraid—I am not ‘the old red-headed woman.’” Saying this, the gipsy embraced Jacques with the tenderness of a mother. She forthwith resumed: “Here is a face which foretells a fair and good day;

so I shall predict a good fortune to this pretty child. Come, look at me with your blue eyes: they are something which will recommend you to the ladies; you will make your way, my child.”—“My way? my way?” murmured Jacques with a sigh. He continued: “Have you been to Italy—you and the rest?”—“Often. So you want to travel? Yes, that truly is a restless glance, which seeks distant lands. You will travel so far, and so well, that your bones, at your death, may be buried in your cradle. If we may believe this rather proud lip, you will be a valiant man-of-arms.”—“Never!” exclaimed Jacques. “And what better do you want to be?”—“A painter.”—“A painter? it is a dog’s life: do not enter on it, if you always want to wear these laces. I know more than one of them who is obliged to live as it pleases God to provide for him. However, if it amuses you, go on: but it is not your destiny.”—“When do you set out for Italy?” asked Jacques. “In November; for in winter we have no other hearth than the sun of Naples.”—“Since you know everything,” continued Jacques, with an air of doubt, “tell me at what age I shall die?” The gipsy took his little hand. By a chance, which destiny at a later period obeyed, the line of life was broken off in the very middle. The gipsy turned her head aside sadly: “The line is not yet formed; at our next meeting, I will tell you the date of your death.”—“Provided that I can reach forty, like my

uncle Brunelhault, it is all that I ask of God." At this moment, Jacques, seeing his father returning from the ducal palace, fled in all haste to the house.

- "Success and happiness be with you," cried the gipsy after him, as she pressed the flower to her lips.

Jacques hoped to re-enter without being seen by his father, but the first care of the herald-at-arms on his return, was to summon his son for the purpose of pulling his ears.—"Go," said he to him, "you are no better than a rope-dancer, unworthy to bear my name and arms, unworthy above all of my title of herald. I have counted upon you, but do you think that the grand duke will trust you with his volume of genealogy, when I am dead? Instead of learning the ancient history of the nobles of our land, to render justice to each, according to his arms and his works, you are composing by pencil sketches the history of cup-tossers—the greatest grand duke for you is the greatest rope-dancer. Go, I despair of you, rebellious child, with your vagabond tastes you will turn out a juggler."

With these words, the venerable Jean Callot passed solemnly to his study. Jacques went and hid his tears in his mother's bosom; the good woman wept also, as she at the same time lectured her son: "You will become more reasonable, my dear child, your tears are those of repentance. From to-morrow you will study without intermission the noble science, of heraldy. Come, come, the bells are ringing for

mass, do not be the last at church, as you always are."

When Jaques was dressed from head to foot, he muttered with a smile of hope: "This is a dress which would answer admirably for my journey to Italy." Until that time, he had only thought of Italy with trembling; he began to abandon himself to this dream with more confidence. On his way to church, his imagination wandered over the mountains of Switzerland and the Tyrol. The chants of the mass, the sun shedding its rays on the altar through the gothic windows, the fumes of the censers, excited him to the highest degree. "Italy! Italy!" cried an unknown voice to him; and all the splendors of the Eternal city passed before him, like enticing fairies; the Virgins of Raphael smiled upon him with their divine smile, and stretched out to him their celestial arms. If he thought of the dangers of the pilgrimage, he reassured himself at the same instant—"Shall I not soon be twelve years old," said he raising his head. In reality, what had this child of twelve to fear? Did not God follow his steps to protect him? The mass over, he remained in the church, to pray to God to bless his journey, and to console his mother; after a while he rose, wiped away his tears, and took, without turning his head, the road to Lunéville, thinking, in all sincerity, that his light purse would take him to the end of the world. We must not deceive ourselves; the love of art was

without doubt the motive of the journey, but did not the journey itself play a great part, in forming the bold resolution of this capricious and rambling genius?

II.

WE have not the entire history of Jacques Callot's journey. We know that he went resolutely ahead, sleeping at the farmhouse or the tavern, like a young pilgrim after having stolen some fruit in the neighborhood; resting at the lonely springs, praying at all the wayside crosses. Although he was accustomed to a degree of luxury, to a good bed, delicate fare, and above all, to the solicitude of his mother, he slept marvellously well on the truckle-bed of the inn, the fresh straw of the farmhouse, usually in bad company; he ate without grumbling, from the earthenware of the peasants, black bread, spoon meat or beans. He never regretted, even in his worst days, the paternal mansion, so severe and pitiless did the face of the worthy herald-at-arms appear to him. In pursuing a glorious aim, Jacques had not laid aside the joys of his age, the pleasing idleness when the sun makes nature gay, the careless liberty, the charm of adventure. If he met a donkey at pasture, he leaped gayly astride of his back, and without troubling himself about his steed, restored him to liberty at one or two leagues from the point of departure; if he found a skiff on a fish-pond or little

stream, he unfastened the chain uncereimoniously, leaped in, pushed off and rowed until he was out of breath. When caught, *flagrante delicto*, his escapade was soon pardoned, on account of his good looks. He thus reached a village near Basle. Although he had so far lived on little, his purse began to sound hollow ; two days more and it would cease to ring at all. Jacques consoled himself by thinking that he would live on fruits, that good mother Nature would everywhere open to him the rural hostelry which has the sign of the *Good Star*. The nights were beautiful, the meadows were being mowed, and did not every sweep of the scythe furnish a bed for Jacques? He resigned himself with good heart to this prospect, more poetical than agreeable, when he heard the sounds of shrill music, which reminded him of his friends, the rope-dancers. You may fancy whether he followed the music or not.

It was twilight; the setting sun was gilding the discolored slates of the steeple, the cows returning to the stable, responded to the shrill sounds of the pipe by their lowings, the bulls by the silvery tones of their bells, the shepherd by the deafening sound of his horn. Jacques soon came up to a troupe of gipsies near the church, who were executing a grotesque dance, to the great wonderment of the villagers assembled in a noisy circle. In order to contemplate the sight, entirely at his leisure, Jacques perched himself on the top of a grave-yard wall. He saw a

score of gipsies of all ages, from the grandmother to the little girl in the cradle, dressed in rags covered with spangles, some dancing, others playing on the fife and violin, some telling fortunes, others passing with forced grimaces, the wooden bowl around the circle of spectators. The sun imparted a pompous splendor to their wretchedness; thanks to the fine weather, the luxuriousness of the season, nothing was apparent but their laugh and their tinsel; one might fancy himself witnessing a gay company of fairies, seeking diversion, or capricious sprites, giving an entertainment for their own amusement. Among the dancers, two young girls of fifteen or sixteen were noticeable, who shed around themselves, by their striking beauty and impassioned grace, a charm of the most attractive character. Jacques followed them with his eyes, with a smile of love and happiness; he could not resist the desire of sketching their portraits. He set to work; as you may imagine, he never moved without his roll of paper enclosing his pencils. When he had grouped after a fashion, the two beautiful dancers in the same movement, he was very much surprised to find himself surrounded by several curious peasants, who were in silent wonder at his skill; he continued his work without troubling himself much about them, but he was not able to finish; for soon the two dancers, finding out that their portraits were being taken, desired in their turn to see if they made a good appearance; they there-

fore came and leaned over, close to the two ears of the sketcher, who finding his charming models so near him, dropped his pencil, "How pretty he is, sister!" said one of them. "How skilful!" responded the other.—"Where does he come from? What is he? Where is he going to?"—"I am going to Rome," said Jacques, without knowing very well what he should say.—"To Rome! to Italy! We are going to Florence, what a lucky companion if he would join us! all roads lead to Rome!"—"Yes, lucky companion!" said Jacques, drawing out his purse, "see all I have got for my journey, and I have besides dined very poorly to-day."—"Poor child! I will take him to the Red Inn, where we expect supper and lodging, milk and beans, and twenty bundles of straw on the barn-floor. Come on, the sun has set, and our bowls are full. Kiss my necklace of pearls, and give me your hand."

Saying these words, the pretty girl inclined her neck to the somewhat rebellious lips of Jacques; he however kissed the necklace, and the neck with a good will, after which the two sisters took him each by the hand, and led him toward the troop, which was just setting forth. He allowed himself to be led away very willingly, thinking, with a blushing face, of the twenty bundles of straw, where he was to have his share of sleep.

The troop arrived a few minutes after at the Red Inn, where they had left their asses and mules, their

wagon and panniers, in charge of two old cripples. Before supper, Jacques was formally admitted; a good escort was promised him to Florence, in consideration of the little money that he had left, on the rigorous condition of taking the portraits of the entire band, men and beasts, without any exception. The odor of the beans made him promise everything the gipsies requested. The supper was gay and noisy; it was washed down with sundry cups of claret, and ended off by a rondo chorus, of which Callot preserved the recollection until his death. The two pretty gipsy-girls, who were his neighbors at table, were also desirous of being so on the barn-floor. He had no cause to complain, for they were the only loveable creatures of the set. He had remarked, that before supper they had, as in the good patriarchal days, washed their feet and hands in the brook. As soon as they felt sleepy, they loosened their ebon locks, tressed them up in a thousand fanciful ringlets, knotted them up or twisted them in papers. He slept beside them, with pleasant, though agitated dreams.

The next day they passed through Basle, where they reaped but a sterile crop. Beyond this city, they pitched their tent in the neighboring woods, where they lived during a week on plunder, like savage beasts. Jacques did not at first understand why they thus retired from the world. It was for man and beast to take breath, to mend corsets and

petticoats, wash the linens and laces, polish the spangles, beat out money and work at small jewelry, necklaces, copper and lead rings, brooches, buckles, medallions and other ornaments, for the use of peasants. Besides, the life was not worse in the forest than in the tavern. Three of the gipsies were capital hunters, not a day passed, that they did not bring to the kitchen in the open air, some rare piece of game. Jacques was surprised to find such good cheer. He followed the two young gipsies in their walks, while the matrons were lighting the furnaces for dinner or supper; he searched with them for birds' feathers for ornaments, for bunches of sorb-berries for necklaces; he gathered wild cherries, strawberries, and gooseberries, for the dessert of the band. He sketched on the bark of trees. In the night, a large fire was kindled to scare away furnished visitors; they lay down pell-mell under the tent or about it; they told grotesque stories of assassins and ghosts. Although the nights in the forest were chilly, Jacques never complained of the cold, thanks to the two pretty gipsies, who jealously protected him. They pushed their tender solicitude for him so far, as to conceal from him the scandalous incidents which were passing around him.

They resumed their route to Italy; walking by short stages, begging in the villages, pillaging deserted châteaux, leaving everywhere their destructive traces. Jacques might have said with Pilate, "I

wash my hands of it," he however ate very heartily, and without needing any pressing, of the fruit of the plunder. One must needs live on something. They crossed the Alps, always supping at the expense of the monks. At last, after six weeks of strange and perilous adventure, Jacques Callot saluted Italy, the Holy Land of Art. It was time; for the poor child in spite of the recollections of his mother, which protected him amid the savage horde of gipsies, had ended by losing himself among these chance comrades, who recognise neither God nor devil, virtue nor vice, good nor evil. The splendid images of Italy were already paling before the two smiling and amorous forms of the two pretty gipsies, when he at last set foot on that sacred soil. "Italy, Italy," he exclaimed, raising his arms to heaven. He wept with joy, and thanked God. From this instant, he felt himself in a purer air; the wind swept away in shreds, all the clouds over his soul. "Adieu, Pepa! adieu, Miji! you are both beautiful, but Italy is still fairer. Italy is my mistress, she it is who stretches out her arms to me, who calls me to her bosom; she is more than my mistress, she is my mother! I go to drink in the love of art from her breasts, full of milk."

III.

IN all this I invent nothing. There are artist lives, like this of Callot's, more romantic than romances. Callot in his most charming caprices, has imagined less than he has recollected. He gave a place a little afterward to his friends the gipsies, in his works; thanks to his immortal graver, we may inspect the whole of the curious group halting, and on the road, entirely at our ease. In the first etching, inscribed with this distich—

“These wretches naught but fortunes bear,
And things to come are all their care,”

we see the gipsies on foot, on horseback, or in their wagon. The picture is most suggestive. The horses give one an idea of the horse of the Apocalypse; the men are covered with steeple-crowned hats, the women are clothed with little save *things to come*, the children are wrapped in rags; they are in great number, there is not a mother who has not one by each hand, one on her back, and one in front. The band is led by a lively young fellow, not ill equipped; a broad-brimmed felt hat, locks falling in ringlets, a doublet far too much slashed, a lance on his shoulder, a cutlass at one side, a carbine at the other, and finally, trousers which sweep up the dust. The young bandit is followed by two rickety nags, each carrying a woman and children, one at the breast, the other

scarcely weaned but sitting bravely behind. At the tail of the horse a saintly brigand, dressed in the spoils of a monk, and two children who walk hand in hand. The first is dressed in a costume, well worthy of description : his hat is an iron pot, whose handle forms a necklace for him ; for a cane, a spit, for coat a basket, for breeches a gridiron, so that on a day of meager fare, the gipsies might broil the child. After these, come the horse and the cart. A gipsy of a ripe age, as behooved to guide so fiery a steed, is gravely perched on the packsaddle : with one hand he holds on to the collar, and with the other, brandishes a whip of formidable dimensions. He carries on his back a small keg of wine or spirits, which he has very good reason to trust to no one but himself. On this keg, a tame cock is crowing and towers above the group, with his crest and feathers. In the wagon, we find heaped together, a man armed with a lance, a woman suckling an infant, other children who are urging on the horse, cooking utensils, a dog, a cat, and decapitated chickens. An ass follows the wagon, carrying like the horses, a mother with her child at her breast. On each side of the wagon are children, children everywhere, who are gipsies already, for they display with pride the ducks and chickens purloined on the route. The caravan is guarded in the rear by a stontly-built gipsy, who carries a lamb on his arm, a sheep in his shoulder-belt, and a carbine on his shoulder. All.

the faces have the true expression of their parts. The men are savage, maternity gives the women a gentle air of melancholy, the children are saucy and frolicsome, the ass and the horses are fearfully meagre. Callot, like a man of intellect who is engraving history, has taken good care not to bridle the horses; for in reality, it matters little what course they take. Whence come they? Where are they going? they do not know themselves. Of what use then are bridles to guide the horses? They go on as chance directs. The ass only is bridled, for the ass is self-willed, and who knows whether he would follow the company?

In the second etching of the youthful days of Jacques Callot, we witness a *halt of gipsies* at the first tavern of a village. The band is installed with arms and baggage in a hay-loft, covered with reeds. In the foreground, a man on foot and a woman on horseback, come straggling along, with a large supply of booty, rabbits, pullets, lambs, and lesser plunder. The woman is dismounting from her horse; with her dishevelled locks, her necklace of glass-beads, her striped dress and roguish smile, she presents an agreeable appearance. A well-equipped gallant, gracefully offers his hand; as a contrast, her companion is the most splendid-looking rascal imaginable; carbine, sabre, cutlass, nothing is wanting to his equipment. A monkey, doubtless of the party, is perched on the back of this redoubtable gipsy

The rest of the company are already installed, so that the pigs who inhabited the ground-floor of the barn, have already taken flight in their panic: the poor animals have never seen such bad company. Their flight is amusing, they upset everything in their way, even the gipsies. Before the dwelling, the dignitaries of the band are strutting with their majestic rags, and picturesque head-dresses; behind this group, which savors of the well-born *canaille*, is a ladder on which the children are climbing, to mount to the hay-loft: do you recognise, almost under the ladder, the hat and feather of our friend Jacques Callot, sitting alongside of one of the pretty gipsies? The artist has been desirous to show that he was present, but not to display the figure he cut. We will not enter the barn, where very curious things must be going on, to judge by what we see at the door, and on the roof. Let us close the door. On the roof, a cat is pouncing on a bird, a dog is snapping at the cat's tail, and a well-aimed stick is about to light on the dog's back. It is a complete drama *à la Callot*.

The gipsies were going to Florence for the fair of the Madonna; they did not leave their guest time enough to visit at his leisure, Milan, Parma, and Bologna; he scarcely glanced at the palaces, the pediments, the colonnades, the fountains, the statues; he went on and on, more and more dazzled and enchanted. It was an endless intoxication which gave him no time to think of his presence among the

gipsies, even when the company were giving a performance.

Now, at Florence, a Piedmontese gentleman, who had become an officer of the grand duke, fell in with Callot among the gipsies. He was struck, at first glance, with the delicate face and noble bearing of the vagrant child: he could not believe that he was part and parcel of this horde, destitute of house or home, faith or law, who were then shaking off their wretchedness by grotesque dances. Callot remained in the midst of the gipsies during their picturesque evolutions; but it was easy to see that he did not belong to this great vagabond family. His wandering glance paused in wonder at the carvings of a fountain, while the looks of all the rest appealed for alms to the Florentine spectators. The gentleman wanted to know what to think of this: he called Jacques, and questioned him with a more paternal air than the herald-at-arms at Nancy. Jacques answered by signs that he knew nothing of the Italian tongue. The gentleman, who knew a little bad French, succeeded in putting himself into more direct communication with Jacques. He learned, in few words, how this second prodigal son had set out one fine morning for Rome, having no other luggage than his rosy youth and his blooming hopes; how he had met on the road, and at a very opportune moment, these brave gipsies, who had sheltered him and given him his board and lodging, without initiating

him too far into their lawless mode of life; how, in fine, he hoped soon to arrive at Rome, in order to study the great masters, and become a great master himself, if it pleased God. This well-defined and reasonable desire in a child from twelve to thirteen, warmly interested the officer of the grand duke. He had never protected anybody; he wished to be good to some one, and for something. He took Callot's hand and led him forthwith to a painter who was one of his friends, Santa Gallina: "Treat this child as you would if he were my own; make him worthy of yourself and of me." Callot was admitted immediately: he was to find, at the end of his reckoning, that it did not cost much to go and study in Italy. At the end of six weeks, Callot informed his protector that he wished to leave for Rome; Rome was the fountain of the living water of art, he wished to drink at the springs where the divine Raphael had steeped his lips. The protector feared that he had been bestowing his favors upon a child who was more of a vagabond than an artist. However, as he loved Jacques, he desired to protect him still with his purse and his counsels. He bought him a mule, filled a valise for him, recommended to him the good roads in all the passages of life, promised to come and see him at Rome, in fine, bade him adieu with tears in his eyes, like a good father of a family. Jacques, firmly settled on his mule, also shed tears; but, once on his way, he soon forgot his protector, to

see only the attractive horizon in which his hopes were floating. Ungrateful infancy leaves nothing behind it.

Callot's journey was blessed by Heaven. He halted at Sienna to visit the church. In examining the pavement of the Duomo, the splendid mosaic of Duccio, he took a good lesson in engraving. He proposed to himself, if he should hereafter engrave, to form his figures with a single line, thickening the lines more or less with the graver, without making use of hatching. At the gates of Rome, he let his mule go at her will. The animal, who had acquired somewhat of the vagabond disposition of its master, established itself, unceremoniously, at a sort of ambulatory manger; it followed, step by step, a donkey laden with vegetables, taking now and then a bite. Jacques did not at first perceive this little *genre* picture; his dazzled glance was lost in the great picture of the Eternal City, over which the setting sun was casting a golden haze.

He was thus attaining his aim; but, as so often happens, he was stopped short at the critical moment. Some merchants of Nancy, who were quitting Rome to return to their own country, met Jacques Callot perched on his mule, his nose in the air, on the point of receiving a whack from the master of the donkey who was walking before him: "Oh ho, Messire Jacques Callot! where are you going to in that style?" The young traveller understood the

VOL. I.—10

danger of the rencontre; he tried to redouble his pace; but how could he escape with a donkey who was pasturing so agreeably? The Nancy merchants had time to seize the fugitive. As the worthy people had witnessed the trouble of the Callot family, they forthwith vowed to reconduct him, under good escort, to the paternal threshold. Jacques could do nothing. It was in vain for him to pray with clasped hands and weep with anger—he must obey. He bade adieu to Rome before entering it

IV.

CALLOT made various attempts to escape from the merchants' caravan; but the Nanceans held on to him well: he was never lost sight of; his mule did not move unless in the midst of the others; all his struggles were in vain. Although he was travelling with respectable company, he sighed with all his heart for those gallows birds the gipsies, repeating this sentence of the Italian beggars: "There is no real amusement except in bad company." He arrived at Nancy after a month of this tedious journeying. His father received him with a sermon on playing truant, and a discourse on the science of heraldry. So Callot secretly resolved on another journey: he refrained for a while, only on account of his mother's tears.

As you know, or you guess, Jacques soon set out

again with a light purse, without informing any one of his movements. He took the road to Italy through Savoy, after having kept along the shore of Lake Geneva. We have no record of this second journey; we merely know that he lived as an adventurer in poor taverns, often in the company of pilgrims, actors, vagabonds, and beggars of every description. He arrived at Turin without many misadventures; but at Turin he met with one annoying enough—he met his brother, the attorney,* who was making a journey on business. This pitiless brother, therefore, hastened to signify to him that he was taken in the very act of rebellion against the paternal authority, and consequently condemned him to retrace his steps.

Will it be believed?—poor Jacques was compelled to return to Nancy, on the requirement of the attorney, on the crupper of the horse of Dame Justice. What will be still more difficult to believe, is, that Jacques set out a third time, but with the consent, and tears of benediction, of his father himself.

* “Jean II., eldest brother of Jacques Callot, was father of Jean III. who married Christina Cachet. He had, by this marriage, an only daughter, Marguerite Christina, whose second husband was Henri Dubuisson d’Isembourg, lord of Aponcourt, major of the *gendarmérie* of H. R. H. From this marriage was born, in 1697, Françoise, who married Hugo de Graffigny. This lady, great-grand-niece of Jacques Callot, who died in 1758, is well-known by her *Peruvian Letters*, and her comedy of *Cénie*,” (Des Maretz). The portrait of Madame de Graffigny is in the French gallery, at the Louvre; it is attributed to Chardin. It is at the same time a most striking likeness of two celebrated actresses of the present day, the two Brohans.

He set out in the suite of the embassy of Lorraine, which was commissioned to announce to the pope the accession to the throne of Henry II. Callot was fifteen: there was no time to be lost for his studies at Rome. It would be difficult to describe his enthusiastic admiration of the wonders of the ancient city. It was, however, a transitory one; for he soon found more amusement in looking about the streets than in the contemplation of the masterpieces of Michael Angelo: the Signora Lavina, with her train and plumed hat, interested him more than the Madonna of Raphael. He worked under many masters, but never followed any but himself. By dint of making light sketches—of representing, like Timanthes, much in small space—he had a vague feeling that his destiny was not to be a painter; moreover, at that time, in spite of the noble attempts of the Caracci, painting was in its decay. He took up engraving with the same ardor that he had drawing. He entered the studio of Thomassin, an old French engraver, who had established himself at Rome. Engraving was an art still in its cradle; with the exception of Albert Dürer, Lucas of Leyden, and some German artists, all the engravers had shrouded themselves in the swaddling-clothes of this new-comer. Thomassin, with slender enough abilities, had made a fortune at Rome. He engraved religious subjects—now and then a secular one. Jacques Callot was of good service to him; young

as he was, he showed him, in each new plate, some new resource. The only trouble was, that Callot grew weary of always engraving figures of saints in ecstasies. As soon as he had a little freedom, he gave the rein to his fancy: he recalled the beggars, the strolling actors, the guitar-players, punchinelloes, bravoos, and other curiosities of the human species. He set to work on his *Cour des Miracles*, that great work, at once light and profound, comic and serious, more sad than gay. Under Thomassin, he engraved in line; but of his works under this master, scarce any are noted but the *Seven Mortal Sins*, after a Florentine painter. The burin was too slow an instrument for one who had so much to create: he soon engraved only by etching. In this style of work a discovery was of much service to him; he found that the varnish of musical-instrument makers, which dries immediately, suited his purpose better than the soft varnish, leaving the artist at leisure to keep his plates in an unfinished state, and return to them with renewed inspiration. He made another discovery, which suddenly gave a very striking character to his works. While admiring in the pavement of the duomo of Sienna the incrusted figures of Duccio, he resolved to suppress henceforth the shadows of his figures, and seek effect by a simple line drawn with more or less force.*

* He received the criticisms of the master and his comrades gayly. "It is stated that, while sketching one day in the midst of his young

One day his point fell from his hands ; his thoughts wandered lovingly to the recollection of those two charming gipsies, for ever lost, who had loved him better than a child is loved. Soon among the forms of his revery, in which all the features of the two impassioned countenances were still living, he beheld, as by enchantment, the proud and beautiful face of the signora Bianca, the young wife of old Thomassin. She sometimes descended to the studio ; she took pleasure in watching Callot at work ; she smiled upon him with her lips of pomegranate and her teeth of pearls. He strove in vain to defend himself from the attractions of the signora : his heart was overcome—he had not power to resist his heart.

I have read this story in the *Curiosités Galantes*, where it is entitled the “Speaking Picture.”† Thus the chronicler relates the amours of Jacques Callot. Thomassin inhabited a palace on the banks of the Tiber. His hand which had already begun to fail, had constructed in this palace, a graceful love-nest for his young wife. He had had the good sense, in spite of his passion for painting, to having nothing

rivals a figure larger than usual, the latter set up a laugh at his defects. Instead of getting angry at the mode and severity of the criticism, Callot, without hesitation, joined in this gay movement, and, himself doing justice to himself, surrounded his defective Colossus with a multitude of charming little figures pointing their fingers at him in sign of derision. Who would not recognise the man in this incident?”—*Des Marets*.

† *Curiosités Galantes*, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Amsterdam, 1687, pp. 53–58.

but Venetian mirrors around the chamber of the signora, so that these glasses, by portraying her, formed the most beautiful pictures in the world. What more beautiful picture is there, in fact—Giorgione is of this opinion—than a pretty Italian woman, dressed or not, nonchalant and coquettish at her rising or retiring to rest. The furniture well worthy of the signora, was composed only of articles which might have pleased a favorite sultana, or a queen troubled with ennui: the richest Turkey carpet, Chinese porcelain, Spanish fans, jewelry of Mogul, the riches of all countries were assembled in this profane temple. What shall I say of the couch! I have not seen it. If I may believe the book before me, it was all silk and gold. In saying that Thomassin had had the good taste not to hang any picture on the wall, I am wrong: he had suspended between two mirrors, guess what? his portrait by himself. It was the only fault which could be found with the room. It must be said, that the good old engraver, was only suffered there in painting. Madame Thomassin scarcely permitted her husband to do more than kiss her hands, when they met in the picture galleries, or when she came into the studio—to see Callot.

Callot was twenty; he was at that time a handsome youth, absent minded and pensive, who knew how to wear his mustache and his sword. He loved luxury in everything; his dress was of the most gallant description; his velvet doublet letting cascades

of lace escape; no cavalier had handsomer plumes in his hat.

Two young hearts that repose under the same roof, always end by beating for one another. Callot became enamored of the signora Bianca. The signora in spite of her pride, was sensible of a weakness for Callot; she took pleasure in seeing him, in speaking to him, in *lighting up his soul*, as the chronicler says, *at the flames of her beautiful eyes*. The good Thomassin could see nothing short of fire, to such a degree, that he begged Callot to accompany his wife to the mass and the promenade, on the days when the gout detained him perforce at home. The young engraver found all this charming. He saw only her at the promenade, he adored only her at the mass. For six delightful weeks it was Paradise regained. Callot contented himself with seeing and admiring; his was the pure joy of the eyes and the soul, the cloudless dawn of love; but the clouds at last appeared, the sky was overcast, the storm descended on Callot's heart: he went farther in his reveries, he lost himself in thick-grown paths, where the rustling vine-branches possess an intoxicating charm. He felt that he could quiet his heart only on the heart of the signora; a kiss, a single kiss, first stolen and then granted, was the great object of his ardent desires. How accomplish this? There are arbors of myrtle and orange-trees in the garden of the palace; has not the signora a skiff, of the wood of the

Indies on the Tiber? Callot was neither a landscape painter nor romantic; he had seen the chamber of the signora, it was in this paradise of Mohammed, in the evening, when the lady, on returning from various *conversazioni*, laid down her fan, glancing in the mirror at the same time, to see if her beauty had lost none of its splendor, it was there that he wished to throw himself at her feet, seize her hand and snatch a kiss by surprise. The adventure was a difficult one, no man ever entered Bianca's chamber, scarcely was Thomassin himself in his strange adoration, admitted there to kiss her feet on the anniversary of the marriage. Jacques Callot got into the good graces of the signora's tiring-woman; the girl consented, cost what it might, to give him the key of the chamber, reserving for herself the excuse, that she had lost it. It was a silver key, chased by a Benvenuto Cellini of the time. The engraver did not take time to admire its execution, but pushed, in all haste, driven by the demon of love, toward the chamber. He started at the sharp click produced by the key in the lock. The door opened, his first glance was arrested by a golden lamp suspended by silver chains from the ceiling. The lamp was always burning, to drive away black dreams: its pale and mournful light died away at the edge of the bed, on the ample ganze curtains. Jacques Callot entered on tiptoe, knowing none too well what he was going to do, and trembling lest he should awaken the lady. He ad-

vanced, scarcely breathing, terrified at the silence, terrified by his love, terrified at beholding on all sides, in the sombre background of the mirrors, his pale face, reproduced to infinity. Reaching the couch, he cast a furtive glance toward the pillow, he discovered in the shadow of the curtains, the beautiful face of the signora, who was asleep, *or who made believe to be asleep*, says the sly chronicler. Callot could not refrain from raising the curtain a little. The ray of light which touched only the curtain of silk, embroidered with flowers in gold and silver, fell on the signora's arm, an arm which Titian would have despaired of being able to paint, so much voluptuous grace was there in its contour. Callot turned his head to see, whether some malicious sprite was not following him. What did he behold? Thomassin himself, with his face half-smiling, half-frowning. Jacques Callot let the curtain drop, but he reassured himself at the same moment : it was only the portrait of Thomassin. "The poor man !" he murmured, again withdrawing the silk and satin. This time the lamp lit up the half-naked shoulder of the signora ; at the first glance Callot saw only a lock of hair and a flood of lace. By degrees his glance penetrated the transparent veil, his lips would fain have followed his glance ; but by a chance, I will not say providential, his lips met those of the lady, who awoke gently, as happens after an agreeable dream. "Until then," observes the chronicler, "she had taken no care to

wake.”—“Is it a dream?” asked the signora, in order to have more time not to know where she was. “Yes, a dream,” murmured Callot, as he seized her hand. “Where am I? What do I see? Is it you, Jacques?”—“Do not awake,” murmured the young man, falling on his knees on the carpet; “I have come in spite of myself, so much has your image fascinated me.”—“Here is a piece of audacity! You entered by the window?”—“By the door,” said Jacques blushing.—“And if Master Thomassin should follow by the road which you have taken?”

Saying this, the signora looked at the portrait of her husband. Jacques Callot also involuntarily did the same. “It is strange,” said he with emotion.—“What is the matter with you?”—“Nothing. This portrait is a striking likeness. Do not let us say any more about it; let my heart speak, which is full of yourself; it is a prettier subject of conversation.”—“I know all that you want to say to me. Return to your chamber, forget that you have entered here through error and surprise. Not a word more, and I pardon you.”—“Depart! you do not then imagine how much amorous heroism I required to come here?”

Callot at the same moment, touched with his hand and lips, the white hand of the signora. The sound of a voice drowned the noise of the kiss. The lady gave a shrill cry Callot turned his head with anxiety. He saw nothing new; his slightly-terrified glance

again lighted on the portrait of his master. "This portrait," said he, "is quite capable of giving an opinion."

And with an ill-timed pretence of boldness, Jacques Callot rose and advanced with an air of mockery toward the portrait. "Come, Master Thomassin, give us your opinion."

At this solemn moment, the portrait turned aside to admit the original.—"My opinion," said Master Thomassin in a fury, "is that I had better pitch you out of the window."

This time Callot himself fancied that he was dreaming. He judged it best to leave Thomassin and Bianca in a gallant *tête-à-tête*. Pushing back the arm of the old engraver, who trembled with rage, he quickly jumped to the door concealed by the portrait, and descended at full speed a secret staircase which led to a study of Thomassin. From this apartment, Jacques passed into the studio, where he patiently waited for morning. At daybreak, he collected some engravings, and decamped without other baggage, understanding very well, that he could not dwell longer under the same roof with the good Thomassin. He thought at first of remaining at Rome, but the same day he left for Florence with a muleteer, thinking that it was necessary to fly from the signora for ever, to live in peace with his heart. In bidding adieu to Rome, he underwent a great disenchantment: it seemed to him as if he was flying

without hope of return, from all the joys of youth, the glory which is radiant, and the love which sings, the intoxicating dreams of an exalted imagination, the enchanted cup at which he had scarcely moistened his lips, glowing with the age of twenty, the palace which he had built on the sand of gold. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "that I could again behold that embodiment of happiness, styled Bianca; shall I some day return to see her?" And he sought in the broad lines of the horizon of the Roman campagna, the fair and attractive face of the signora. He did not again behold Madame Thomassin, he did not again return to Rome. As he had foreseen, the Eternal City was the tomb of the fairest portion of his life, of the amorous dreams of his soul, of the spring-time of his heart. Once away from Rome, the life of Callot loses its adventurous and gallant character, and offers us henceforward scarcely anything but laborious nights, following peaceful days.

V.

JACQUES CALLOT went to Florence, not knowing whether he would remain there; he hoped to find a situation in the studio of his former master. He was almost without resources, and, what was much worse, without courage. He indolently abandoned himself to his somewhat capricious star. At the gate of the city he was arrested as a stranger. Already in a

bad humor with the uncertainty of his lot, he flew into a rage and wished to resist. He demanded to be conducted forthwith to the palace of the grand duke, and made known his griefs and his claims to his highness Cosmo II. The grand duke, who received and protected in a royal manner the artists of all orders, told Jacques Callot that he congratulated himself that he had been arrested in his states; that he himself would go through the form of detaining him in his palace, where there was a great school of painting, sculpture, and engraving. Callot was enchanted at the accident. He installed himself in the palace and set to work with greater ardor than at Thomassin's. Besides his old master, whom he found again, he met with a painter and engraver whose acquaintance was precious to him; it was Alphonso Parigi, who prepared the stock of ballet-scenes, festivals, and comedies, forming the pompous spectacle of the grand duke. Callot passed some time at this work.* It was then, if we may believe certain indications, that, to relieve himself, Callot now and then took the brush from the hands of his friends the painters, Stella and Napolitano. He painted at random, following only his fancy, some paintings in the Flemish style. We find in the gal-

* I have seen at the Academy of the Fine Arts of Venice, some pictures attributed to Callot. They are believed to be authentic, but I scarce recognised the Lorraine artist in them. What is indisputable is, that at the sight of the pictures attributed to Callot, no one will regret that he should have used the graver in place of the brush.

lery of the Corsini palace twelve small pictures, representing the *Life of the Soldier*; the catalogue signs them with the name of Jacques Callot—but catalogues are often deceived. A small and more authentic picture has remained in the Florence gallery, in testimony of Callot's talent as a painter. This painting is in the Flemish and Dutch room. It represents a half-length of a warrior dressed in the Spanish style, with a hat and plume. We discover the piquant manner of the engraver in this little picture; it has the same purity of design, the same severe and fine touch, the same ingenious grace of composition. It might be regarded as a lighter page of Terburg. Farther than this we can not go; Callot never was a painter any more than Jean-Jacques was a musician; the effects of chance or caprice should not count for much in the arts. The enthusiastic admirers of Callot have desired, at any cost, to represent him as a painter; they have found his works everywhere, have almost declared him more fertile than Van Ostade. I imagine that we must rather trust to Vasari, Balduccini, and the abbé Lanzi, who have preserved silence about Callot in their histories of painting.

Callot remained ten years at Florence. Cosmo II. having died, Ferdinand continued to him similar protection. He was even honored, like the great geniuses of the grand duchy, with a gold medal suspended by a costly chain. During these ten years,

scarce relieved by any glimpses of love, he engraved, among other subjects worthy of his talent, *The Well*, and *the Purgatory*, *the Journey to the Holy Land*, *the Massacre of the Innocents*, *the Fair of the Imprunetta*, *the Great Passion*, *the Life of a Soldier*, and a hundred other charming and grotesque fancies, always original.

These plates are almost all marvels of art; Callot attains in them magical effects before unknown, unknown afterward even to his imitators. Never did the copper resist his powerful hand; on the copper he created; we may push the image so far as to say that he created a world out of chaos. He was not a severe and artless creator, for he saw everything through the prism of his fancy. Perhaps, like a great poet, he understood that everything meets in life, the grand and the grotesque; that, in the most serious pages of this great book, there is always a word to raise a laugh.

Toward the close of his sojourn at Florence, work became his sole passion, a passion of more and more engrossing character, without pity, without reprieve, which led him to the tomb, still young, but already bent down, blasted, exhausted like a noble horse who has run too long for the prize. The poor artist had lost without recall, by a fatal blindness, the precious treasure called time. Wo to those whom time overtakes and drags along! Poor Callot had no longer eyes except for engraving; if he left his studio, it

was only for subjects, a beggar, a soldier, some queer actor in the comedy of life. He did not give himself time to admire the grandeur and beauties of creation, neither the sun, nor the golden stars, nor the flowers that scatter their perfume, nor the beautiful evenings, nor the fine nights, nor the verdure, nor the cascades, nor the girls of twenty. It seems as if God had given him, as his only joy, the copper-plate; heart and soul were of small account.

He returned to Nancy. One evening, the old herald-at-arms, leaning out of the window, seeing a carriage draw up at the door of his house, asked his wife whether it was an equipage of the court. The good dame Renée, who saw clearer, with heart and eyes, than he did, exclaimed, as she fell powerless on the window-sill: "It is Jacques—it is your son!" The old herald descended in all haste, asking himself whether it was possible that his son, the engraver of bits of buffoonery, could have returned in a carriage. He embraced him gravely, and after the first hug, hastened to see if the arms of Callot were painted on the carriage. He put on his spectacles, and discovered with a proud joy the blason of his son: five stars forming a cross, "the cross of labor," it has been said, "for the stars indicate the vigils of Callot and his hopes of glory."

Somewhat weary of his vagabond career, Callot resolved to end his days at Nancy; he bought a house and married. Nothing is said of his wife,

Catherine Kuttinger, except that she was a widow and had a daughter. This must certainly have been a marriage of policy. Scarce was he married when he became a great devotee, attended mass every morning, and passed an hour in prayer every evening. Was it to thank God for having given him a good wife? Was it to console himself for an unhappy marriage? He resumed his labors; but adieu to his mad inspiration, adieu to satire and gayety! If any flashes of his better days ever returned to him, it was because a man's character, however extinguished, will now and then emit a spark of its former self. His burin was henceforward occupied only with religious or grave subjects.

His talent, as is always the case with original talent, made a noise everywhere; at Paris, at the court itself, his wonderful fancy-pieces were admired. The king Louis XIII., about to set out for the siege of La Rochelle, summoned the Lorraine engraver to his suite, saying that he alone was worthy of immortalizing his victories. Jacques Callot, somewhat averse to human vanities, more imbued with the glory of God than that of men, obeyed with some regret, for how could he go to the mass down there, among all those soldiers, destitute of faith or law. After the siege he returned to Paris, to complete the engravings of this feat of arms. He was lodged at the Luxembourg, where he again fell in with his friend Sylvestre Israel, and where he became intimate with

some decorators of the palace, decorators sufficiently remarkable, such as Rubens, Simon Vouet, Poussin, Philippe de Champagne, and Lesueur.

In spite of these illustrious friends, the protection of Louis XIII., the thousand attractions of Paris, Callot returned to Nancy as soon as his work was completed. He loved more than any one else, peace, quiet, and a limited horizon. He left the care of editing his works, to his friend Israel, who pushed his good friendship, I am speaking without raillery, so far as to sign with his own name, a great number of Callot's engravings; but usually he contented himself with bringing them to light, according to his expression, that is to say, publishing them. Here is pretty nearly the title of all these engravings. "*The Miseries and Misfortunes of War*, portrayed by Jacques Callot, a Lorraine noble, brought to light by Israel, his friend." Israel is sometimes desirous of passing for a wit; nothing is so curious to mark, as his artlessness of style; he might be taken for a child, or a schoolmaster who had assumed the pen.

Callot's chief motive for returning to Nancy, was his love for his family and his native city. He was a national artist. "He had quitted with contempt," says an historian of Nancy, "the servile people of Italy; he returned to Nancy to humbly lay down his glory, and live on his genius." He loved his country with a proud and noble love; in that respect, he had been imbued with the paternal traditions.

In his leisure hours, he studied with a thoroughly national religion, the high deeds at arms of Lorraine, as the defeat of the Burgundians, where the men of Nancy accorded to the conqueror of Ghent, of Liege, and of Montlhéry, Charles the Bold, the hospitality of death.—“Ah!” exclaimed Jacques Callot with the Latin historian, “the Greeks are glorious by their wars, but especially by the recital of their victories. Nothing more is wanting to our country, but a Xenophon.” He left among his unfinished engravings, an allegorical figure of Lorraine, surmounted with a shield, with the device: *God and my sword*. In reality, in those fine days of universal vassalage, Lorraine was mistress of herself, mistress of her glory, her labor, and her thoughts. Jacques Callot appeared in the splendor of the royal duchy; he was a witness of the great reigns of Charles III., and Henry II. The entire nobility were illustrious by its actions, the body of citizens laborious and intelligent, the people happy under their light chains; the arts were worthily represented in painting, music, and engraving; religion was based on the good faith of our forefathers; industry already raised her manufactures, the laborer blessed the honorable peace. Nancy, protected by four gigantic bastions, masterpieces of Orphée de Galéan, seemed to say to strangers, by the sculptured ornaments of these bastions: Respect the empire of the arts and of liberty. Jacques Callot however, had the misfortune to wit-

ness the decline of his *nation* (the word is in the writings of the times). Charles IV., a rash soldier whose sword was his entire policy, suffered the great and noble edifice which Henry had confided to him to be demolished by piecemeal, through a fatal blindness; in his imprudent hands, Nancy lost all except honor. The origin of the great misfortunes which weakened this country, was Gaston d'Orleans. Charles IV. bestowed upon him his sister in marriage. Cardinal Richelieu was exasperated against this ally of his enemy, to such an extent, that Louis XIII. came and laid siege to Nancy, at the head of his best soldiers. The king, on the promises of the cardinal, fancied that he was going to reduce the city, like La Rochelle; but he was disappointed on discovering that Nancy was the best-fortified and best-defended place in the whole Christian world.

Louis XIII. kept at a distance, and lost courage. The bad season arrived, there was despair under the tent of the king, they talked of raising the siege, when the cardinal, who desired a triumph at any price, at the price even of honor, attained his ends,* by a falsehood followed by a violation of the law of nations. He enticed the duke Charles into the presence of Louis XIII. in the hope of signing the preliminaries of peace. The duke of Lorraine presented himself without mistrust, in the camp of the French army, where the king in obedience to the cardinal

* *Nancy*.—History and Picture by Guerrier de Damast.

made him a prisoner, and extorted from him the order to open the gates of Nancy. The princess of Phalsbourg, who defended her capital like a heroine, wished to pay no attention to this despatch of a captive sovereign; but the governor chose to obey his master. The French—must it be said?—abused this surprise; the garrison, forced to lay down their arms, wept with rage. “Ah! if we had known that, the king would have entered only by the breach, and over our bodies.” Jacques Callot had been of the opinion, held by the proud Henriette de Phalsbourg; when he saw that all was lost, he shut himself up in his study to restrain his wrath, he wept with rage as he heard the joyous flourishes of the conquerors drown the sobs of the conquered.

All the careless artists of the city, rushed to pay their court to Louis XIII., who was astonished at not seeing Callot among them. “He has then forgot what I have done for him?” said Louis XIII. to Claude de Ruet. The painter went and reported the king’s remark to the engraver. “Yes,” said the brave artist with indignation; “yes, I have forgotten his favors, since he entered fully armed, by the open gates of Nancy.” Claude de Ruet pressed his friend to follow him, to the ducal palace, where Louis XIII. gave audience. “Never,” said Jacques Callot. The painter left him to his anger and grief; scarcely had he gone out, when an order arrived, signed by Duke Charles. “Jacques Callot is summoned to the pal-

ace, to appear before the king.”—“ Well, then I will go, but without lowering my head.” The king received him very graciously: “ Master Callot, we have not forgotten that you have devoted your talents to the service of our glory; you have engraved for future ages the siege of the island De Ré and of La Rochelle; you will now represent the siege of Nancy.” Callot, who felt himself outraged, raised his head proudly: “ *Sire,*” he answered, “ *I am a native of Lorraine; I would sooner cut off my thumb!*”

Having said this, Jacques fancied with reason, that he was to pay dear for his bold answer. The whole hall was in a hubbub, the courtiers exclaimed against him, swords were drawn, at a signal, soldiers, armed with partisans, appeared at the door; on the other side, the Lorraine nobles, who had remained faithful to their country, formed a circle around Callot, resolved to protect and defend him, when Louis XIII., who had now and then the soul of a king, and of a man, said to Callot, to the great surprise of the entire court, and of the artist himself: “ Monsieur Callot, your answer does you honor.”—And turning toward the courtiers, “ The duke of Lorraine is very fortunate in having such subjects.”*

* Callot was of a noble disposition; De Ruet, his friend, an historical painter and director of festivals, under the dukes Henry and Charles, decried him; Callot, to revenge himself after his manner, engraved the portrait of his friend at full length, and sent it to him with eulogistic verses.

This same year, Jacques experienced the attacks of the malady, which slowly destroyed him. He was at first desirous to escape from his love of labor; he resigned the burin, and passed the summer at Villers, where his father had a country-seat. He followed with a smiling eye, the merry sports of the daughter of his wife; he took her out to walk, to see her bounding in the dewy grass, like a sportive heifer. Nature, who is a good mother for those who suffer, far from subduing Callot's illness, perhaps irritated it more by her spring-time splendor, her penetrating balm, her joyous songs. Besides, Callot was scarcely conscious of this sweet picture of the variegated fields, the rustling woods, flowering hedges, blossoming orchards. He was contemplating the fantastic images of his imagination; he was especially watching then—do you guess what?—the devil, Satan, his infernal population, his eternal flames! Callot believed strongly in the devil, in his pomps, his works; he saw the Seven Capital Sins in person, with their attributes at work, under his catholic eyes. Callot had already commenced in his mind, his great work of the *Temptation of St. Anthony*, a burlesque and grand poem, almost every page of which is worthy of Ariosto and Dante.

It was at the doors of the tomb, that Jacques Callot executed this strange work, with a pious veneration for Saint Anthony. Do not regard it as a grotesque work, designed to cause fear or pleasure.

Callot was desirous of representing the triumph of virtue resisting by the sign of the cross all the attacks of hell. It is a pious work, composed between the mass and vespers, by a fanatical but Christian poet; it is a vast picture with a good design, in which we find the thought of the evangelist faithfully translated.

The *Temptation of St. Anthony* is most certainly a serious work. Callot, who believed in the devil, like Hoffman, that other dreamer of the same family, took good care not to laugh at him. If he has painted the devil as a wag, it must be attributed to his capricious turn of mind. All the accessories of this great picture, would appear less grotesque to us, if we could ourselves believe a little more in the devil. All the allegories produced by Callot, are strange, but very orthodox. The idea of the *Temptation* was derived by him from the perusal of Dante; he read and re-read the great Italian poet, he kindled his imagination by the luminous and fantastic rays of this star of poetry, and at last in his turn, created a poem on copper, worthy of the other poem, by its fire, its force, and its madness, a strange poem which has a thorough savor of its own hell, and might scare the devil himself.

The physicians ordered him to abandon work, to live free from care in the country, in the open air and sunshine. He paid no attention to their commands; he was desirous of consecrating his last strength to

VOL. I.—11

the final completion of his immense work, finding enjoyment only in labor. He was a prey to a melancholy without apparent cause; he no longer took an eager interest in anything, except in prayer; he was not dead, and he was no longer of this world, it was all over with his heart, he wore, for more than a year, mourning for himself. We must believe that Catherine Kuttinger was not to him another Signora Bianca.

In his last days, however, Callot seemed to rouse himself again to life; he shook off the dust of the tomb, with his too catholic dreams, his heart leaped once more, a ray of youth reanimated his extinguished soul. He caught up his point again and engraved, with all the fire of his better time, the plate known as the *Little Arbor*. Fancy to yourselves, a company of peasants seated at table, under an arbor of vines, at the door of a joyous village tavern, celebrating by a kiss to their sweethearts, every stoup of claret which they toss off with a song. It is a Sunday, after vespers, the sun is sinking in the horizon, all nature is gay, the birds sing on the branches thickly covered with foliage, through which winds the flowering vine; under the great rustling elms, the fiddler scrapes his violin to call together the girls. In beholding the serene joy of these drinkers, we ask ourselves, if happiness is in the depths of their flagons, on the lips of their sweethearts, in the cheerfulness of nature. We pause with infinite zest over the

picture, we would take, without being pressed, a seat at the rustic table, we would throw aside without regret, our little share of vanity, to breathe beneath this enchanted arbor. Who knows, but that Callot, undeceived as to everything, has written there in dying his last dream?

Callot died at last, the 25th of March, 1635, aged forty-two years; he was buried in the cloister of the Cordeliers; a splendid tomb was raised over him, among the sepulchres of the family of the dukes of Lorraine, a tomb surmounted by a pyramid, from which was suspended a portrait of the artist, painted on black marble, by his friend Michel Lasne. It was a portrait of life size, boldly touched; a garland of oak leaves was carved in stone around it, for a frame. Was this the emblem of the national virtues of Callot? The genius of his art leaning against the border, sustained with one hand her pensive head, and in the other bore a palm. Callot was represented with black hair, parted over the forehead, and cut in the style of the *curés* of his parish, a pointed tuft on his chin, bright eyes, a ruddy complexion. He was dressed in a black doublet, with a large frill and sleeves turned back, and to complete his attire had the gold chain and medal of the grand duke of Florence around his neck. Under the portrait, on a marble tablet, was to be read this epitaph, of a new sort:—

" TO POSTERITY.

"PASSER-BY, cast your eyes on this inscription, and thou shalt know how far my course has been advanced ; thou wilt not be sorry if I should detain thee a little in thine own : I am Jacques Callot, that great and excellent cacographist, who reposes in this place, awaiting the resurrection of the body. My birth was respectable, my rank noble, my life short and happy, but my renown has been, and will be, unparalleled. No one has ever been equal to me, in all sorts of perfection, in designing and engraving on copper. The whole earth has acquiesced in the extraordinary praises which have been bestowed on me, without my ever having on that account departed from my natural modesty. I was born at Nancy, in the year 1594, and died also at Nancy, March 25, 1635, to the incredible regret of Lorraine, my country, and of all the rarest spirits of our age, and principally of Catherine Kuttinger, my spouse, who, as a last pledge of affection, has erected to me this tomb.

"Pray to God for him, who will never pray for anything to thee, and pass on."

The cordeliers, not fancying this epitaph, effaced it, to inscribe a Latin one in true tombstone style, terminated by this distich : "*Stabit in æternum nomen et artis opus.*" A friend of Callot, who did not understand any of the cordeliers' scrawl, traced

under the Latin verses these lines, which are in verse, if I may trust the rhymes :—

“In vain whole volumes may be filled,
With eulogies upon Callot ;
For me, I'll but one word bestow :
Your pens must to his burin yield.”

This last epitaph was preserved ; it was inscribed on a small tablet inserted under the medallion ; an *erratum* only was made, *our pens* being substituted for *your pens*, in order not to offend these good cordeliers. It costs something to be interred like a great lord ; in 1793, the *sans-culottes*, thinking they had to do with a grand duke, mutilated the portrait and destroyed the tomb. A portion of the portrait was afterward discovered and the curious fragments preserved. After having sustained the attacks of the French revolution, the ashes of Callot, discovered in 1825, were religiously transferred to the church. Callot reposes side by side with the dukes of Lorraine, under an altar-like tomb surmounted by a pyramid. It is to be hoped that he will rest in peace this time until the last judgment.

Had the grand-niece of Callot, the mother of madame de Graffigny, who turned all the plates of Jacques Callot, the true armorial bearings of the family, into a fine set of cooking utensils, ever read this pompous epitaph ? O vanity of epitaphs !

VI.

THE works of Callot are composed of nearly sixteen hundred plates, including those signed by Israel. We must pass with a bird's-flight over almost all the minor religious works: Callot without fancy is no longer himself. We can see that he becomes weary over this tiresome work. The works in which he expands, in full luxuriance and splendor, are the *Temptation of St. Anthony*, the *Fair of the Madonna Imprunetta*, the *Tortures*, the *Massacre of the Innocents*, the *Miseries and Mishaps of War*, scoundrels of every form and fashion, from the impudent bully to the beggar draped in his rags. It is in this strange gallery that we can study the treasures which he has lavished in the art of creation by engraving.

He engraved with wonderful facility, more than once completing a plate in a day; it was often nothing more than a pastime for his fairy-like hand, and his rich and vivid imagination. He often, as in his *Book of Caprices*, in his fancy and grotesque pieces, suffered his hand to move at random; he talked with his friend, throwing out a witty speech at the time with a curious line, and was astonished himself at producing a figure. His burin, too, was so fruitful in resources, that amid his innumerable creations he never reproduced himself. He was besides an earnest artist, studying incessantly, full of

his work, loving the smell of the lamp. He had a passion for creating beggars, bullies, and vagabonds, as others have a passion for gaming; it was almost an intoxication: when he sat up till morning, he said to his friend that he passed the night with his family.

Etching is, as has been said, the writing of the thought of the artist. With it he enjoys full liberty of touch and fancy. It does not freeze inspiration by its slow progress; it has the spirited pace of the high-mettled steed. Callot—so varied, so original, so capricious—is the grand master of the art.

His genius has various characteristics worthy of study; it is bold and fantastic. Whatever may be its disguises, it always astonishes. His manner is very exact in design and very finished, without being labored; he thus expresses, without any confusion, the thousand confused incidents of fairs, of sieges, fields, and spectacles. He needed, to succeed, little space and many characters; for in two strokes he created a scene, a character, or a physiognomy. According to the reverend father, Dom Calmet, "There are engravings of Callot's, in which you can cover with a crown-piece five or six leagues of country, and an inconceivable multitude of figures all in action." Never has, in so little space, so much fire, spirit, delicacy, and charm, been combined; never was any one more picturesque. Salvator Rosa himself, in his etchings, does not surpass in picturesqueness the engraver of Lorraine. Callot does

not always, despite his marvellous dexterity, hit the mark; he dazzles, but does not convince.* He has pre-eminently the art to seize and surprise; if he once gets you under the charm of one of his engravings, he does not let you go until you have examined and re-examined the half of all his magical creations. I say the half, for one could never see the whole.†

Coming after Albert Dürer, and before Rembrandt, Callot, in spite of all his genius, is somewhat effaced between these two great masters in the art of en-

* Callot has more enthusiastic admirers: "What nobleness and elevation in his style, when he treats historical, and especially, sacred subjects, such as the *New Testament*, the *Life of the Virgin*, the *Passage of the Red Sea*, the *Massacre of the Innocents*, the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, and so many others. Is not the "prodigal son" as noble when he takes leave of his father, as he is degraded when he returns to implore his forgiveness? Remark the graceful carriage of this lady, the elegance of her cavalier, as contrasted with the humble attitude of the beggar who appeals to their compassion. How much pride in this warlike chief, how much charity in this ecclesiastic who is comforting the dying man! Everywhere shall we find the same contrasts, and the same truth, in the audacity of crime, and the terror of torments; in the sports of the populace, and the exercises of the great; the ignoble effrontery of the buffoon, and the celestial resignation of the martyr."

† There was a carver in wood, a worthy *bourgeois* of Nancy, Laurent Mennoyse, who produced the greater part of Callot's grotesques in relief. The work of this excellent figure-maker was of the most curious and varied description. His figures adorned the shelves and chimney-pieces of our fathers. "These little figures," said the cordelier, F. Husson, a century ago, in his eulogy on Callot, "agreeably replace on the chimney-pieces of Paris, as of Nancy, the manikins of China." His beggars are mentioned as little wonders. Time has scattered, mutilated, and destroyed all; the artist's name alone has come down to us.

graving. Albert Dürer has a thoroughly German imagination; he is artless to sublimity; he disdains manner and effect. He is wanting in the ideal of the beautiful, but he lovingly caresses the ideal of expression. Sentiment is his genius. He copies the nature he has before him, as did Callot: but Albert Dürer, rising to the highest mission of art, ennobles his creations by thought and expression. Callot, more enamored with form, contents himself with making his actors play their fantastic comedy. The first touches us and sets us dreaming; the second, with his piquant grace, his original wit, his pleasing outline, dazzles and amuses us. Raphael, seeing the wood engravings of Albert Dürer, asked him for his portrait and sent him his own. Van Dyck, seeing the wonders of Callot, was desirous of painting that master on his journey in Flanders; they also made an exchange: while Vandyke painted, Callot sketched his painter. If I were not afraid of comparison, I should say that there is the same distance between Callot and Albert Dürer, that there is between the divine creator of the *School of Athens* and the chivalric Flemish portrait-painter.

Rembrandt, who is akin to the great family of Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, Titian, and Rubens, was also, like the artist of Lorraine, a painter of rags; but, while he is the high poetry of rags, Callot is often but caprice in rags. Rembrandt neglects contour for effect, Callot

neglects effect for contour ; one is color in engraving, the other drawing. Callot, born at the threshold of Germany and Flanders, has none of the artlessness of the Germans, none of the nature of the Flemings ; born a Frenchman, he had the easy manner, the ringing laugh, the philosophy of his nation ; besides, he had acquired in Italy, his second country, light caprice and skilful boldness. In spite of the diversity of their genius and character, Albert Dürer, Rembrandt, and Callot, will always be confounded in a like admiration, when those who were creators in engraving are spoken of. All three did not propose to themselves the same end, but all three attained their end.*

No one has reaped so abundantly as Callot, with a golden sickle, in the verdant fields of Fancy. Fancy is the tenth muse ; she soars in the blue sky. If she descends to earth, her domain is everywhere where there are roses to be plucked. She neglects the golden fruit which weighs down the branch. She is a scholar who lingers along the sweet-smelling hedge-rows, who turns aside to pluck a violet or drink at the brook. She is constantly in motion, like the bee, over the red flowers ; she gathers poetry from the verdant hedges ; but the bee returns to his hive,

* Callot never willing to remain short of his aim, has often gone beyond it in the risks of his impetuosity. His expression is sometimes extravagant. Being afraid of not saying enough, he says too much : like those preachers, carried away by the intoxication of eloquence, and not by the luminous trace of thought.

while the scholar loses herself in the pursuit of her chimeras. The muse of Jacques Callot was Fancy: wit, grace, melody—nothing was wanting to this pretty poet except reason. His Fancy is the lively gipsy-girl who hides her rags under the air of youth and gayety. How is it that he charms us without moving us deeply? It is because Callot has not painted man with his joy or his grief; he has painted a curious mask, which assumes the grimace of grief or joy. This eternal picture of human miseries enlivens or saddens only the fancy. His comedy of fifteen hundred acts is, therefore, neither purely gay nor purely sad; it stops at the bark, it strikes only light blows. His finest efforts in buffoons, the best grimaces of his beggars, bring a smile on the tips of our lips—a smile which floats, like himself, between nature and mannerism. His work is not the picture of life, but its carnival; his rags are only disguises. Although a Frenchman, he has none of the comic depth of Molière, or the Gallic artlessness of La Fontaine. This carnival of Callot is, however, dazzling; it is the complete history of the beautiful Italian gayety, which emitted its first song with Ariosto, and whose last peal of laughter echoes in the eighteenth century through the comedies of Gozzi.

FRIEND CALLOT,
 PHILOSOPHIC DREAMER, BENEATH THY STRANGE RAGS,
 SAD POET, BENEATH THY PEALING LAUGH,
 IF I HAVE FAILED IN THY PORTRAIT, TAKE THY SATIRIC PENCIL,
 AND WITH AN AVENGING STROKE CRUCIFY ME
 AMONG THY MOST FANTASTIC SKETCHES

RAOUL AND GABRIELLE.

I.

SINCE romance-writers have penetrated with the clew of Ariadne, the labyrinth of contemporaneous passion; they have lost and recovered their way so often, that in fact, an unknown corner scarcely remains to be discovered. The virgin-forest has been profaned beneath every branch. Not a single hidden violet that has not been found and gathered, to perfume some romantic page.

Romance is no longer there. We must give Destiny time to write again upon the heart; passion must reveal itself under another form, for passion changes its mask with each generation. How great a distance separates the regency from the hotel Rambouillet, Jean-Jacques from Voltaire, the shepherdesses of Boucher from the nymphs of Prudhon! While awaiting this metamorphosis, let us travel in the past, let us stop for an hour in this tufted romance, where sing the love and poetry of the twelfth

century, the romance of Raoul and of Gabrielle, a spontaneous romance, and which is yet, without disparaging the shade of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, the finest in French literature, that of the abbé Prévost excepted.

This romance is written word for word, in the poetry of the hero and the heroine, in the tradition and in the miniatures of the time, but not in the drama of Du Belloy. I write this upon the high tower of Coucy, evoking the phantoms of the past.

II.

THE château of Gabrielle has disappeared, but the tower of Coucy is yet erect, proud, mysterious, gigantic.

The monuments of Gothic art, have not like those of antiquity, the rosy hue of youth. They give out the odor of the sepulchre, they speak to us eloquently of heaven, which is our destiny ; but for a path, they point out the sombre passage of the tomb.

The tower of Coucy, built upon a mountain, which overlooks the valley d'Or, is one of the most eloquent pages of the history of France. It is like an old king of the first race, standing erect upon a commanding throne. It is a ruin so majestic, that no one has had an idea of using it in an age when the utilitarians have seized upon everything. It is respected as a formidable temple, whose altar is cast down, but whose God still lives.

The foundation of the château dates from 880. An archbishop of Rheims laid the first stone. Charles the Simple was imprisoned there in 929. The history commences by the prison. The château passed from the hands of the count de Vermandois into those of the counts de Senlis, soon into those of Hugues, count de Paris, finally into those of Thibaut, count de Champagne, but it was upon the stock of the counts de Vermandois, that was grafted, that powerful family of the sires de Coucy. *I am neither king, nor prince, nor duke, nor count ; I am the sire de Coucy.* He who had adopted this proud device, aspired to the throne of France ; another Coucy disputed the crown with Austria ; a third took the title of *sire de Coucy, by the grace of God.*

And, in truth, the sires de Coucy were king ; upon their estates, and sometimes upon those of their neighbors. Thus Enguerrand the First, in his valiant or only adventurous excursions, met at Château-Portien, the beautiful countess Sybille, celebrated for the number of her lovers. She had just married the lord of Namur, but he had gone to the wars. Enguerrand, without much violence, carried off Sybille and married her in the sight of God and man, waiting till the other should return from the wars. The church prepared to launch its sacred thunders, *but it was a sire de Coucy !*

The first husband declared war against Enguerrand. It was a war of extermination. They cut off

the feet of the prisoners, and said to them: "Go, you are free." The most favored were hung, and died pronouncing the sweet name of Sybille. At last the war ceased, because Sybille deceived both husbands. This Enguerrand was the father of the celebrated Thomas de Marle, "who counted upon his fingers the crimes of the previous evening" as a morning prayer.

III.

It is from the centre of this rude epoch that we see the figure of Raoul de Coucy detach itself, radiant with the aureole of youth and love.

It was in the time of tourneys and of minstrels, the world reposed in all the daintinesses of gallantry, from its religious and barbarous wars. Raoul de Coucy saw at a tourney Gabrielle de Vergies; she was beautiful, among the most beautiful; twenty springs had crowned her brow with roses and lilies; but her white hand, which, according to the verses of the time, would not have blushed in the snow, she had given to Eudes, lord of Fayel, who was neither a warrior nor a poet, but a rustic hunter in love with the forest.

At this tourney, Raoul spoke to Gabrielle only by his passionate glances. She appeared not to understand him; however, when she mounted her palfrey at the command of the lord of Fayel, she cast

upon Raoul a look which dazzled and intoxicated him. On his return to Coucy, Raoul found there a minstrel who was rambling through the province—one of those extravagant poet's without house or home, who place their poetry at the service of those who have none of their own. Until then, Raoul had not written a line; it was love that opened to him the sanctuary of poetry.

When he and the minstrel had supped in company, he related to him his celestial vision at the tourney. The minstrel—like all of his class, fond of adventures—had a fearless predilection for enterprises of gallantry. He said to Raoul: "If you do not yourself dare to go to the château of the sire de Fayel, and tell his wife that you are dying for love of her, I will set out in your place, and will sing to her, under her husband's nose, the most tender lay that ever a woman in love listened to.

Raoul consented to take the minstrel for his ambassador; but the minstrel set out and did not return, not daring to appear before the eyes of Raoul after having been badly received at the château de Fayel.

Raoul, in the meantime, emboldened by his passion, determined to go himself and sing the joys and griefs of his heart at the château of Gabrielle. He mounted his steed and set out in all the charm of amorous visions.

He arrives at the château, frightened at the beat-

ings of his heart. He was ushered into a large hall with dark beams, to which were suspended the trophies of the chase. Gabrielle was alone in the ogive of the window, looking through the panes, framed with arabesque, at the clouds flying across the sky. Raoul placed one knee upon the floor, then went and seated himself before Gabrielle and gazed at her in silence.

She was so beautiful, with her hair fastened with a circle of gold, and her robe with large flowing sleeves, he was all eyes, and could not find a word to say.

“Such rare perfections surely prove
That Gabrielle was made for love.”

I have before me the old miniature which represents Raoul and Gabrielle at this eloquent interview. She has on shoes pointed like the emperor of China. He is armed with a cutlass, the ivory handle of which is in the form of a heart—a charming trinket of the time. He has a silver collar, half hidden by a long beard and long hair. His hand is raised like an admiration point before Gabrielle. The châtelaine de Fayel seems waiting for him to explain himself.

Finally she met his confession half way with these words, so naively engaging: “Messire de Fayel is out hunting in the forest since yesterday morning.”

Raoul, encouraged, commenced to sing: “My eyes would never be satiated in gazing at her sweet

and tender countenance, her white hand, her slender fingers, which make us love violently; neither her beautiful arms; nor her graceful form, supple as a reed that waves in the wind; nor her blond hair, like the sheaves in August: all the beauties which shine in others are united in her."

He did not stop at this strophe: in the second he undoubtedly became too bold, for suddenly the lady de Fayel reminded him that she was bound by the strong tie of marriage.

Raoul, however, was retained to supper, but he could neither eat nor drink. "Eat, then," said the lady de Fayel maliciously to him: "I beg of you, by the faith you have sworn to me, make somewhat of a better face of it."—"Alas, I am too much in love."—"I am not afflicted by your pain, Signor Raoul, for I have been told that the pains of love only last for a season."

The hunter entered while they were at table. He did not think of troubling himself at the visit of sire de Coucy; he told him that he would always be well received beneath his roof. He related with simple pride all his prowess at the chase. He promised Raoul to lead his hounds to the woods of Coucy.

Some days after, Raoul returned to Fayel. This time Gabrielle dried the tears of her lover. At the same time, she told him that all that she could do for him would be to weep with him, but that she would never betray her plighted faith.

Raoul returned again, always more in love, always more entreating. He most always found Gabrielle alone; he left her at the time the sire de Fayel would return. He often spoke to her of carrying her off and going to one of his châteaux in Champaign, which would be for them a terrestrial paradise. At these words she would always get indignant and threaten to close the door upon him. But Raoul had fought too valiantly, and had made too many breaches, to slope on the way. "I have never seen you," said he, "but by the light of day, or by the light of the silver lamps; I wish to see you, my beautiful châtelaine, by the amorous light of the moon and stars."—"But I—I see you there every night," replied Gabrielle in her soft sweet voice; "when the moon rises, I descend to the garden, and your dear form appears to me like a vision under all the trees which I pass. More than once—shall I tell it you?—I have gone out of the tower which faces toward Coucy, and have walked an hour, as if I was going to meet you; I well knew that you would not come, but I was as happy as if you were to come."

Raoul did not say that he would come, but he came.

The first night Gabrielle did not leave the tower; but the second, Raoul while leaning against the door, heard the noise of the key in the lock. She opened it; with one hand he seized that of Gabrielle, with the other he seized the key. "Since I have so well

that of your heart, why shall I not have that of your château?"

An entire season passed with them in nocturnal meetings. Never had the moon, with her melancholy eyes, seen such passionate lovers. They only met for an hour, but for them, the entire day and night was in that hour.

However, Raoul who but now was the handsome chevalier everywhere renowned, no longer saw his friend, went no more to tourneys, nor to the castellans' fêtes. In vain one of his neighbors, wearied with her solitude, attempted to draw him to her, and make a paradise for him in her château. At first he allowed himself to be taken, for the lady was pretty; but the image of Gabrielle triumphed. The slighted châtelaine told Raoul, that she would be revenged.—"I know," she said to him, "why you do not see me when I am before you, it is because you love Gabrielle de Vergies; but take care, the lord of Fayel is my cousin."

Raoul did not take care; he went according to his custom. He took the key and opened the door of the tower, but having ventured into the dark, he seized a hand which was not that of his love. "I am betrayed," he cried, "to me, my cutlass!" He had recognised the sire de Fayel.

There was a violent combat. The sire de Fayel had a reinforcement, but Raoul fought to see Gabrielle again. But if Gabrielle had not entered the

tower, though frightened, strong through love, it would have been ended with her lover. The women of this loving and barbarous epoch, did not content themselves with falling on their knees and weeping. They were valiant in love and in danger.

IV.

Six weeks passed away. Do you see down there, through the willows, in the valley, the yellow roof and red chimney of that little noisy mill, which turns day and night? Since yesterday, you will find there a pretty fellow of a miller, who calls himself Raoul, and who sings sadly a lay of love; he is dressed in coarse cloth, and covered with flour; but beneath the dress and the flour, you see at once, that this pretty miller has not passed his youth in grinding corn. Why then has Raoul de Coucy come there? 'Is it that he is suddenly smitten with the miller's wife?

Since six weeks, what has become of Gabrielle? The sire de Fayel has placed his château in a state of siege. His wife has wept, but without letting her tears be seen. "Well," said he to her one day, "do you still think of the sire de Coucy?"—"The time is so long, since I have seen him, how is it you should think I have not forgotten him? I only ask one thing of you, lord of Fayel, that is, to prevent me from dying from ennui; give me some amusement. Ther why should I not accompany you to the chase?"

The sire de Fayel, loved his wife like all the Sganelles of the middle ages and the present day. He allowed her to accompany him to the woods. After three or four promenades, she found means to send and inform the sire de Coucy, that she would be on Sunday at the mill of Gué. This explains the metamorphosis of Raoul. But how will she go to the mill of Gué, this loving woman, who is as it were, the source of the heroines of George Sand?

On Sunday she heard mass in the chapel of the château. The chaplain has given her his benediction, she begs the sire de Fayel to mount his horse, and accompany her to the valley, to go listen to the songs of the reapers.

She draws him toward the ford, by the mill, telling him, that she has never felt so happy as in this ride. On reaching the ford, she urged her horse on, and threw herself in the middle of the stream. The sire de Fayel threw himself after her, raised her up, and drew her to the bank. "And now," said he, "what am I to do with you, in this pitiable state?" "I am more dead than alive. But do I not hear the noise of the mill? Carry me there, and go to the château and bring me other clothes."

The jealous sire de Fayel carried his wife to the mill. Raoul was at the door: "My good man, grant your hospitality for an hour to the lady de Fayel. Make a good fire, tell your wife to see to her, and to

give her her bed. I am going to the château and will soon return."

He left. Is it necessary to say, that Raoul took Gabrielle in his arms, and dried her with his kisses.

Do we find in modern romances, bolder inventions or fresher pages? It is a complete succession of pictures, picturesquely accentuated, and of a brilliant and charming color.

When the sire de Fayel came back with a dress to the mill, Gabrielle was in bed. She did not wish to dress herself. She said to her husband, that she was sick, and would not be able for some time to return to the château.

The historian has not related word for word, all the pretty scenes of this comedy. This mill has been for the two lovers, a garden of Armida. Love has this that is beautiful, that he creates a paradise everywhere.

V.

RAOUL and Gabrielle could not always remain at the mill. There was a genuine miller and his wife? who were *ennuyés* at no longer making flour. And moreover, that which the two lovers made, was not always, said the chronicler, of gold or snow, for often in their joyous gambols, they forgot to put grain into the hopper. It was, however, at the mill, on the borders of the pond, under the green willows of the meadow, in this rustic nest, that they were happy.

to their hearts' content. They had sentinels to warn them by an air on the pipe, when the sire de Fayel came to the mill, in going to the chase.

Gabrielle surprised more than once in the peach-down of health, could no longer persist in calling herself sick. The sire de Fayel, gave a horse to the miller, for having taken such good care of his wife, and finally carried Gabrielle home. He learned the romantic comedy too late. He revenged himself by doubling the bolts. Gabrielle henceforth saw the sky only through her window; nevertheless, after his jealous fury, the sire de Fayel permitted her to go to any part of the château, hoping to get once more into her good graces. It is not known whether she could still write to Raoul, but one evening, her maid said to her: "Lady, do you hear the wind and the rain?"—"Yes, I hear the wind and the rain."—"Do you hear, in the wind and rain, a voice that weeps and sings?"—"Yes, for my heart beats higher, it is my lord de Coucy."—"Lady, the sire de Fayel has returned weary from the chase, he will not awake before day."—"Bertha, do not talk to me thus. Give me my missal."—"What! your heart is not touched? The poor sire de Coucy will die at the gate. Lady, take my dress, and go to the tower; if the sire de Fayel wakes, I will be in your bed."

Gabrielle was fond of adventures, she took the maid's petticoat, and went to admit Raoul. If the husband awoke, what mattered it?

VI.

ALL the wiles of the Spaniards were known to Raoul and Gabrielle. One evening, an old pilgrim, broken down by age, with a tattered cloak, a beard like the Wandering Jew's, a rosary and cross of box-wood in his hands, presented himself at the château, and asked for hospitality.

The sire de Fayel was at supper with the lady of the château; he called the pilgrim, and gave him a place at his table. "Whence come you?"—"From the land of the passions."—"Whither are you going?"—"To the blue region filled with stars."—"Your name?"—"I have none."—"My father," said Gabrielle in her turn, "you are gifted with prescience?"—"Yes, for I am a sinner, I have kept company with the seven capital sins, those fatal beads, which we must tell in life, before opening with faith the doors of heaven."—"My father, have you opened the doors of heaven?"—"Yes, noble lady, in my pilgrimage to Jerusalem."—"Jerusalem!"—"Yes, I have brought from Jerusalem, a shred of the Virgin's veil."

As he said these words, the pilgrim took a veil, from his heart, and offered it to Gabrielle. "If the lord of the château consents, I will give you this veil, noble lady, for no one in the world is more worthy to wear it, at a Christian ceremony. I only ask in return,

VOL. I.—12

that you will grant me hospitality, to perform a nine days' devotion in the chapel of your château."—"We should be too happy," said Gabrielle eagerly, "to have such a holy person, diffuse here the perfume of his faith, and the incense of his prayers."

For nine days more, Raoul and Gabrielle reopened their romance at its most impassioned pages.

The sire de Fayel, weary of the pilgrim's orisons, set out every morning for the chase, and did not appear until supper. One evening, however, he came near surprising them. They had not heard him enter; the maid was singing and listening to her own song; all at once, the sire de Fayel appeared in Gabrielle's chamber, but the pilgrim had had time to throw himself upon his knees, before the *prie-Dieu*.

Gabrielle was busy combing her beautiful locks, and spreading violets upon them. "You come in time," said she to her lord, "for this poor pilgrim was about putting me to sleep with his litanies."

The pilgrim who was on his knees, turned around. "Lady," said he, bowing before the husband, "a day will come, when you will acknowledge that it is unnecessary to beautify yourself, except for God alone."—"And what of me?" said the lord of the château, in a feudal voice. "God, the king, who is the image of God, the lord of the manor, who is the image of the king and of God, is what I meant to say," murmured the pilgrim in confusion.

The husband out of patience went to lead to the

kenzel three large dogs, who were permitted to enter the halls of the château, and who were wilding leaping about, or yelping for their share of the booty.

The pilgrim approached Gabrielle. "Farewell, my love, farewell my heart, farewell my joy, for I perceive that we are at the end of the nine days' devotion."—"To-morrow only," said Gabrielle in a supplicating tone.—"But this evening, it is nine days since I arrived."—"My lord has not counted, nor I either. Have you not one single orison more for to-morrow?"

Raoul cast a passionate glance upon Gabrielle. "Am I then no longer beautiful, at the end of nine days?"

She was so beautiful with her floating locks, spread over with violets, that Raoul in intoxication, seized that dishevelled hair with a trembling hand, and bit it madly with his white teeth. He gathered up all the violets, and swore to bear them upon his heart, "*until the day when my lips shall have burned them up.*"

VII.

RAOUL departed for the Holy Land. They saw each other once more to say "farewell;" and she gave him *a true-love knot of silk, very beautiful and well made, and there was some of her own hair worked in with the silk.* She gave, him besides, a precious ring, which she had always kept, and which

he swore to wear until his last sigh. How many tears and how many kisses at that last farewell, for the Holy Land was far from France in the middle ages!

This is Raoul's song of farewell:—

“Lovers, it is to you I tell my grief. I must go beyond the sea, I must quit my loyal mistress. In losing her, I have no longer my foot upon the earth where the roses bloom in the spring-time. Ah! if men die of a broken heart, my amorous lays will be heard no more.

“I am going to die so far away! and she will not be there when I shall fall, to sustain my bleeding brow upon her snowy bosom. And she will not be there to speak to me those sweet words which she alone could speak beneath the heavens.

“Oh! my heart, where will you go? You are bounding in my bosom, like the hind in the forest when she is wounded by the hunter. The hunter is my evil destiny. It is death that sends me beyond the sea. Oh! my heart, go to her.

“Why, oh my heart, dost thou remain to me, when Gabrielle is torn from my arms? Song, springing from my heart, go to her—go and tell her that I depart for the Lord, and that I will return for her.”

On his arrival in Syria, Raoul was surnamed the knight of the mighty prowess; he combated his love only by his valor.

Or, rather, he still sang, to soothe his heart:—

“When the sweet wind blows that comes from the

land where dwells the lady whom I love, I turn my face in that direction; I seem to feel upon my gray cloak the sweet wind that comes from the land where she that I love awaits me. Oh! breath of Gabrielle, soul of her mouth and of her heart, is it not thou that dost come to me from so far?"

But he wished to live for the Holy Cross. Gabrielle felt that she was dying far away from him. Love also made her a poet; she composed lays:—

"I wish to sing to comfort my heart, for, in spite of the cruel loss which I have suffered, I will not abandon myself to the madness of despair. I wish to die, but not till I have embraced him once more, for at that last embrace, I shall die."

The most curious stanza is this:—

• • • • • • •
 He sent the shirt he used to wear
 With fire to burn me all away;
 When thoughts of love my bosom tear,
 That shirt upon my couch I lay
 All night next to my body bare,
 To charm my raging pains away."

We see that the passion of Raoul and Gabrielle was at once tender and furious, gentle and savage; he sent her, not a lock of hair, nor an amber necklace, nor a ring of fine gold, but his shirt, *to set her on fire*. That verb *embraiscier* (to set on fire) is paradise and hell. Francesca de Rimini experienced nothing so passionate in the poem of Dante.

Raoul, after he had sent his shirt to Gabrielle, sent her his heart.

For two years he braved every danger in Syria: he was wounded *deeply in the side by an envenomed dart* at the siege of Acre. The king of England took him respectfully in his arms and gave him the kiss of hope. But the dart was poisoned; Raoul understood that he had but a few days to live. He stretched out his arms toward France: "France! France! Gabrielle! Gabrielle!"

He wished to depart, but hardly was he aboard the vessel when he called his squire:—

"When I am dead, you will take my heart and carry it to France to madame de Fayel; you will likewise take to her all the rings and diamonds that I have, in token of love and remembrance."

After which Raoul wrote, with a hand which death was about to seize:—

"Lady, I love to let you know that I have always been your vassal. I have carried away your heart with me, I send you mine. Ah! charming and unctuous creature, you surpass all women as the evening star shines brighter than its sisters. Your heart is the purest grain. Your beauty, amid other beauties, is the diamond, the sapphire, the red rose. Sweet fountain of charity, you are filled with every virtue. When I think that I must die far away from you! But you know the way by which we shall see

each other again—it is the way to heaven. I await you in God?"

Raoul, as we see, had remained a poet in the midst of combats, in the face of death. This letter was like the song of the swan; hardly had he signed it with his blood, when he expired, raising his eyes to heaven, that place of meeting at which no one fails, and where he did not wait long for Gabrielle.

His squire, as he had desired, took his heart, "*salted it and preserved it in good spices,*" which means that he embalmed it. After which he returned to France with that precious testament. As he passed through Brindes, he left there the body of Raoul, that it might be splendidly interred.

VIII.

THE château de Fayel was still a prison to Gabrielle. The sire de Fayel was unwilling to pardon her. If Raoul had set out for the Holy Land, it was because Gabrielle had prevailed upon her husband to join the crusade; but the latter, having found out that Raoul had gone, remained behind. He had constituted himself the judge and jailer of his wife. When he went to the hunt, he carried away all the keys at his girdle.

Vainly had Raoul's squire attempted to penetrate into the château de Fayel; it was like the castle of the *Sleeping Beauty*.

He met the sire de Fayel, beneath the roughest exterior; the lowest of his game-keepers was better clothed than himself. The squire asked him if he could not get access to the château. Occupied with his own sorrow, he did not see the ferocious joy of the sire de Fayel, who according to the chronicle, smelt the fresh flesh of Raoul.

The squire allowed himself to be disarmed, after having received a hunting-knife in his side. The sire de Fayel when he had unveiled the precious charge and read the letter, possessed the secret of that funeral message. He re-entered the château, and ran to his cook with a savage joy: "You will dress this heart in such a manner, that it will be an agreeable dish."

The cook did so, "and dressed another dish in the same manner, and served it up in fitting style, upon a plate; and the lady was served with it at dinner, and the lord ate of another dish that resembled it."

Yes, at dinner, the heart of Raoul was served up for Gabrielle, who *thus ate the heart of the châtelain Raoul, her lover. When she had eaten, the lord asked her: "Lady, have you eaten of a pleasant dish?" She answered that she had eaten heartily. "Therefore did I have it prepared," replied the lord of the château, "for that dish which you loved so well, know that you have supped off the heart of Raoul de Coucy."*

As he said these words, the sire de Fayel, threw

upon the table, the open casket which contained the letter. Gabrielle turned pale as she recognised the seal; she took the letter with a trembling hand, and read it with a haggard eye.

"Sire de Fayel," she said with a majestic air that astonished her husband, "you have raised your vengeance to the height of your soul. I complain not. It is true I loved that dish well, for I believe that he is dead, who should be mourned as the most loyal knight in the world. You have made me eat his heart, and it is the last food I will ever eat. Since it is not right, that after such noble food, I should ever eat any other."

"Therenpon, at that word, she swooned away, and the body remained without life."

Gabrielle fainted, and returned to life, only to die. The chronicle does not tell us whether she died of hunger, after having eaten the heart of her lover.

It has been said that the sire de Fayel, had been cruel and savage; cruel, yes; savage, no; for instead of making his wife eat the heart of Raoul, he might have eaten it himself. The sire de Fayel was refined and delicate in his vengeance.

IX.

THE poems of Raoul de Coucy, like those of Gabrielle de Vergies, are the eternal May-song, which, from the shepherds of Theocritus, to the romantic dreamers of 1825, all lovers have sung. The muse of love is always the poetry that confides to heaven and earth, to the woods and the fountains, the hopes of a heart half open unto life. It is always the same song, it is only the rhyme that changes—even the rhyme is almost always the same.

I prefer Gabrielle's poetry; we there feel the passion more. Is not the whole poem of her heart contained in these three stanzas?—

“Within an orchard, 'neath the hawthorn's shade
A lady held her lover to her heart,
Until the dawn should come upon the hill.
Oh God! my God! how soon the dawn appears.

“My own sweet love, we'll play at other sports
Within the mill that sings among the reeds.
A lovely miller's wife I'll be to thee.
Oh God! my God! how soon the dawn appears.

“But have a care, it has a sentinel!
Sweet night's departing now; my love, farewell.
I've drunk thy soul as 'twere a ray of heaven.
Oh God! my God! how soon the dawn appears.”

There is not one of these verses but possesses poetry and feeling. Among the great poets, is there one who would disavow these three stanzas? The poetry and the lovers of the twelfth century were

disfigured at the Opéra-comique, at the time of the Restoration; but to persons of right mind, an epoch always has its serious aspect, even in its caricatures. What especially strikes us in the manners of the twelfth century, is, that the refinement and gallantry of France begin to leave the savage forests and appear in the châteaux. The heart of the lady is the feudal lord, the faith of the knight is the vassal. Chivalry has begun to make captive the primitive barbarism. It is only in days of war that they cry "Blood and pillage!" it is only on days of merry-making that they perpetuate the Roman orgies. What catholicism has not done, woman, that apostle of the heart, will do with a glance, with a smile, with a tear.

Woman in the middle ages was like the visible image of the Deity; she opened the door to the new world, she plucked for the rude and savage hand of man the sacred flower of spirituality.

THE HUNDRED AND ONE PICTURES OF TARDIF, THE FRIEND OF GILLOT.

Among the celebrated amateurs of pictures, in France, at the end of the seventeenth century, was Tardif, originally an engineer, afterward secretary to maréchal de Boufflers. He was the friend of Largillière, of Watteau, and of Audran, but especially of Gillot. His criticisms went right to the mark. When a picture was finished, none ventured to pass a verdict on its merits until Tardif had seen it; his opinion was, so to speak, the finishing touch of the brush. Watteau himself, who laughed at criticism, said, when laying down his brush before a newly-finished *Fête Galante*, "There is a masterpiece; if Tardif were here, I would sign it." Tardif had one of the finest cabinet collections in Paris — rue Git-le-Cœur, No. 1. The maréchal de Boufflers, aware of his secretary's passion, gave him every year, as a new-year's gift, a picture from the hand of a master. Tardif himself, out of his patrimonial fortune, had purchased pictures from his friends, the

living painters, and by his friends, the dead ones. So renowned was his cabinet, that one day the duke of Orleans went to visit it with Nocé, which succeeded in turning Tardif's head. Nevertheless, if the worthy man had been guilty but of this one extravagance—which at least was evidence of a noble aspiration to the poetry of the beautiful—he might have retained wherewithal to live respectably till the end of his days. Unfortunately, he fell into another folly, and suffered himself to be duped by the scheme of Law. This is tantamount to saying that he lost, in that revolution of French fortunes, all that he had—except his pictures.

It was essential, however, to find the means of living. Most people would have got rid of their pictures; Tardif got rid of his servants. "Go, my friends," he said, "into the world, where money circulates; henceforward my household must consist of persons who do not eat; my pictures will keep me company." Tardif was old, the passions of life had no further hold upon his heart, a ray of sun was all he needed to live happily in his cabinet.

He had some wine remaining; he went down to his cellar, and found with joy that his wine, now that he should no longer keep open house, would last longer than himself; that he might even, on gay anniversaries, summon Watteau and Audran to make merry with him, amidst the melodious gurgling of the bottles.

As he came up from the cellar, a bottle in each hand, he met old Gillot on the stairs. "Watteau and Audran, well and good," said Tardif; "but, Gillot! the barrel of the Danaïdes!"

Before he had finished the words, the old wine-loving painter had seized a bottle and pressed it tenderly to his heart. "My poor old Gillot, here is what I have left."—"Well!" said Gillot, "every man his bottle."

For Gillot's farthest glance into futurity never reached the morrow. "Tardif," continued he, "you know that I have come to dine with you?"—"With all my heart, Gillot, but there is no great matter for dinner."

They went in. Tardif put a piece of bread upon the table. "The devil!" cried Gillot, unfolding his napkin, "your style of living will soon rid you of parasites."

Tardif, however, munched his bread with good appetite while gazing around him at his dear pictures.—"What matter!" he exclaimed; "henceforth it is not this bread and wine that will compose my repast; I will breakfast with a Teniers and a Ruysdael, dine with a Vandyck, or a Murillo, sup with a Santerre or a Watteau. On grand festivals, I will treat myself to my Paul Veronese; when my spirits or appetite are bad, I will nibble your gay little masterpieces, friend Gillot."—"Well said," cried Gillot, filling his glass. "If all these masterpieces were

mine, I would eat them too ; but in such wise that in a few years, not one of them should remain. Take my advice, Tardif, and do not seclude yourself from the world, with these dumb personages who already seem to mock you. Mother Nature did not give you a mouth that you should feed yourself on chimeras. You will be like the dog in the fable, who eats his shadow and goes mad.”—“ As you please, friend Gillot. If you dislike my mode of living, you will not return to my table. For my part, I find my mind more hungry than my flesh.”

As good as his word, Tardif persisted in living on bread and wine in the midst of his pictures.

He gave his watch and seals to a fishwoman, who opened oysters at a tavern-door, opposite his windows, on condition, that each morning she should bring him his bread, make his bed, and sweep his room. This woman had still freshness, a kind of souvenir of that devilish beauty, which usually departs at five-and-twenty—or even sooner when the possessor is an oyster-seller, at the door of a wine-house. She sang merrily, and laughed continually with all the power of her red lips and white teeth. With her cap on one side, her short petticoat and her joyous humor, she was an additional picture in the gallery, and not the worst of the collection.

Tardif, old though he was, became accustomed to this picture, as to the others ; and as it was voluptuous in drawing and in color, it often happened with

this, as with the other pictures, that he would enthusiastically place his hand, often unconsciously, upon the most beautiful fragments. The fish-wife would laugh a little louder, and there was the end of it.

Such was the state of affairs when Tardif, who at long intervals showed himself in society, met, at the house of abbé le Ragois, the grammarian—who had been a frequent visiter at the hôtel de Boufflers when Tardif was the maréchal's secretary—the reverend Father Dequet, a Jesuit, celebrated in those days, and procurator of the novitiate of the faubourg Saint-Germain. Tardif, who remarked this holy man hovering about him, would fain have departed, in obedience to a vague presentiment; but, before he could do so, the reverend father got abbé le Ragois to present him to Tardif. "Monsieur," said Father Dequet, "I have heard from my friend, that you possess one of the most curious cabinets of pictures in the world: will you not do me the favor to open your door to me? Pictures are the only somewhat profane enjoyment I allow myself"

Tardif, who disliked visitors, and did not greatly esteem Jesuits, did not, however, dare to shut his door on Father Dequet. He came two days after, accompanied by abbé le Ragois. He praised everything, the Magdalens as well as the Virgins, the Bacchantes as well as the Magdalens, with an expansive enthusiasm which intoxicated the old amateur.—"I

own to you," said he to Father Dequet, "that I am not exactly prepossessed in favor of the Jesuits. Your morality is far from being that of the gospel; your manner of interpreting the Scriptures is very different from mine. But in my eyes, you are now no longer of the congregation; you are a lover of pictures, and, as such, you will always find my door open."

The reverend father often returned, to go into ecstasies, in Tardif's cabinet, and little by little Tardif came to consider him as a friend. His other friends — his old, his true friends, those who drank his wine and talked to him of old times — laughed a little at his infatuation with Father Dequet, and foretold to him that he and his pictures would end by enrolling themselves in the order of the Jesuits. He laughed himself, and appeared quite easy as to his fate.

On the other hand, Father Dequet did not lose his time. With evangelical mildness, he pointed out to Tardif the dangers of solitude, to the possessor of pictures of such great merit and value. With discreet, but seductive hand, he half opened to him the gates of the novitiate of the faubourg Saint-Germain. "There need be no change in your habits; you may live like a pagan if you please, as you do now. If you fall ill, no strangers will approach your sick bed, for we shall all be there—we who are the brothers of him who suffers. You will no longer have to fear being plundered—a picture you know, is carried off

as easily as a book—we will prepare you a large bed-room, in which you can hang up the whole of your hundred and one pictures.”—“A hundred and one!—you have counted them then?” said Tardif slyly to Father Dequet. “Counted—not so,” the Jesuit, hesitatingly replied. “If I know the number so accurately, it is because you told it me.” He saw that he had ventured too far, and that the moment was not yet come; he hastened to beat a retreat, to avoid being totally routed. “My friendship blinds me, perhaps,” said he mournfully. “My sole desire, my friend, is that you may live long without uneasiness about your dear pictures. Believe me, you have too much confidence in your neighbors; for instance, that fishwife, who enters here at all hours, coming and going without control—who knows what tricks she may play you? Would you believe it, my friend, I have seen her three or four times at the picture-dealer’s on the bridge of Nôtre Dame?”

Tardif bounded like a wounded deer; the shot had hit the mark. “Gersaint!” exclaimed he, “a scoundrel who prevented Watteau from selling me his finest *Fête Galante*, *Cythera Besieged*. If ever she enters his house again, I will shut my door in her face.”—“But, my friend, you will not know it; your legs are no longer good enough to follow the wanton, and she will take care not to tell you whither she goes or whence she comes.”—“You are right, my dear friend.”—“*Mon Dieu!* it was Father Ra-

gois who opened my eyes on that score.”—“But, if I dismiss her, who will bring me my bread, go to the cellar, and make my bed?”—“That is easily managed—I will send you some one from the Novitiate.”—“All things considered, I would rather help myself; for I have already told you that, with the exception of a few superior minds, like you and Le Ragois, I have little love for the priesthood. Nevertheless, now that I am aware of a real danger, the woman shall come here no more; nor will I allow any one, with the exception of two or three faithful friends, to penetrate into my beloved sanctuary.”

Accordingly, Tardif told the fishwife he had no further need of anybody's services; and from that day forward he lived in strict solitude, fancying that all his neighbors, and all the persons whom he saw from his window pass along the street, were engrossed with the sole idea of making their way into his apartment, and carrying off his pictures.

Each morning he went down stairs himself to get his bread; he spoke to no one. Did he venture as far as a neighboring picture-dealer's to recall the happy time when he still was a picture-buyer, the key of his house was clutched in his trembling hand. As often as he met the fishwife, he turned away his head, not to hear what she said to him. “Ah! my poor Monsieur Tardif, it is my notion that you are going mad: the black-gowns have troubled your eye-

sight, the ravens have flown across your path—my songs were well worth any that they sing you.”—“’Tis true,” said poor Tardif to himself, “but my pictures!” Yet he could not help regretting those still recent days, when the fishwife’s visits imparted cheerfulness to his apartment and to his heart.

One night Father Dequet asked him if he had any heirs. “Yes,” was the reply, “I have heirs—a brother and a sister: my brother has some property; my sister has a great many children, and that is all she has. I am grieved to have lost everything by Law’s scheme. But for that, I could the sooner have proved to her children how much I loved their mother.” Father Dequet walked three or four times round the cabinet, pausing, with a sigh, before each picture. “Is it not a thousand pities,” murmured he, “that so precious a cabinet must one day be dispersed?”—“Never!” cried Tardif.—“Simple man,” continued the Jesuit, “what do you suppose your nephews and grand-nephews will do with your pictures?”—“You are right. The Burgundians love color, but only in their wine.”—“Yes, my poor Tardif, they will sell your pictures to the highest bidder. Some will go to your enemy Gersaint; others to some Jew, who will hide them and deprive them of the light they live by. Some will go to America, some to China; and this beautiful *Banquet* by Veronese—who knows whether it will not be exposed for sale upon the quays?”

Tardif had become pale as death. "You torture me," said he to the Jesuit, clasping his hands together. In his turn, he made the circuit of the cabinet, gazing despairingly on his pictures. "Do you know," said he on a sudden, turning to Father Dequet, "at night, when I do not sleep, which often happens, a strange desire—which I dare avow to no one—comes into my head, and that is, to build a subterranean gallery, where I might bury myself with my pictures. But it is madness; and besides, I am diverted from the design by the thought that these beautiful works of art would never see the sun again. But, for Heaven's sake, my dear friend, let us speak of that no more. You have put me in a fever; I shall eat no supper to-night."

Father Dequet departed, leaving Tardif a prey to the most sombre anguish. The poor man went to bed half dead. Next morning the fever had not left him. He would receive no one—not even his friend Gillot, his good genius.

The second day the fever was still more violent: Death himself was knocking at Tardif's door. He did not open it, but Death remained upon the threshold, and entered with Father Dequet when he next called. Tardif's mind had already wandered. He had no water left, and craved a drink. "Ah! my poor friend," said Father Dequet, "I little thought to find you in your bed."

The Jesuit went down himself to fetch water.

When Tardif had drunk, he expressed his gratitude, but in so altered a voice, and in such singular terms, that Father Dequet said to himself: "This is the last stage." For two entire hours he remained assiduously by the sick man's pillow, striving to subjugate the now enfeebled mind which had so long repelled his caresses. What he said to the dying man, none ever knew. What is certain is, that at the end of the two hours, Father Dequet was in possession of the following eloquent lines, in Tardif's handwriting:—

"I give all my pictures to the Novitiate of the Jesuits, in consideration of my friend Father Dequet, who is at liberty to take them away at once.

"TARDIF.

"PARIS, 20th *May*, 1728."

Father Dequet was not the man to await Tardif's decease to consider himself well and thoroughly the heir of his treasures. His first care was not to take the viaticum to the dying man, nor yet to run for a physician or an apothecary; neither the soul nor the body of Tardif touched his heart—his sensibility was entirely engrossed by the pictures. No sooner had he obtained the written donation than he went out, collected a dozen vagabonds who had nothing to do, took them up to Tardif's room, and ordered them, while the poor man lay moaning in his bed, to carry away the pictures.

With a dogged avidity, he himself took them down from the wall. The little Flemish gems, scarce larger than the hand, he laid aside to carry with him in a hackney-coach. The men he had brought could take but sixty pictures at one journey. He took away twenty-one in his hackney-coach, thus leaving twenty in Tardif's room. He did not even tell him he was going away. From time to time, while taking down the pictures, he cast a furtive glance at the bed, and made sure that the poor man was becoming more and more delirious.

Meanwhile the whole neighborhood was indignant at this profanation, this impiety, this sacrilege, committed by the reverend father. But as, after all, for some months past, Tardif would have nothing to say to any of his neighbors, and as none interested themselves in an old madman secluded from the world in a room full of pictures, the spoliation was allowed to proceed—just as, on the stage, people suffer so many crimes to be committed without thinking of interference.

The morning passed away: Father Dequet did not return. Doubtless he had to get ready a room at the Novitiate for the pictures, the majority of which were not very catholic in subject.

Suddenly Tardif, rousing himself from a doze, put his head out of bed and called for Father Dequet. For the first time in his life he felt frightened at the stillness around him. He asked himself if he

were already in the tomb. He hurried into his cabinet.

Seeing the walls bare, he shouted, "Thieves!" ran to the window, opened it, tore his hair, and called to the oyster-woman, who was seated as usual at the tavern-door, smiling at her customers as they ate her oysters and drank her health.

When Tardif called her, she left her chair and went under his window. "Make haste!" cried Tardif, "don't you see I am dying? and if that were all—but they have stolen my pictures!" The oyster-woman went up to Tardif's room; she bore no malice; and besides, she had always liked Tardif, because he flattered her and talked to her of her fine eyes. When she reached his room, she found him senseless on the floor. She took him in her arms and carried him to his bed. "He must not be left to die like a dog," said she to herself. When the sick man opened his eyes, there she was with her eternal smile. She had sent for a physician, who soon made his appearance, and who saw that Tardif could not get through the night. "Have you any family?" he inquired. "They have taken everything," replied the dying man, "the best are gone; a few remain, but what is that!" This was all the explanation that could be got from Tardif.

Gillot came in. At sight of his friend, poor Tardif seemed visited by a gleam of intelligence. "Ah, my dear Gillot! why have you been so long without

coming to see me? There is still more than one bottle waiting for us in the cellar, bedded in the dust, as I soon shall be myself. As for me, I am now but an empty bottle." Gillot took the sick man by the hand, and tried to prove to him that he would recover. "I am no doctor, my dear Tardif, but if you take my advice, you will send for four bottles of wine—one for me, one for you, one for your physician, and one for Death, should he make his appearance."—"Well spoken!" cried the fishwife—"only you forget that I am here." Tardif smiled his pleasant smile, as in his good days. But suddenly he grew deadly pale. "My pictures! my pictures! my pictures! You have stolen my pictures!" He raised himself in his bed, but fell back again exhausted.

These were the last words he spoke. Gillot and the fishwife watched beside him all that evening, and all that night. They drank his wine—of that there can be no doubt—but that was all they had of his inheritance.

Tardif breathed his last at daybreak. The previous evening, when he was already dying, Father Dequet came to take away the remainder of the pictures. The fishwife undertook to receive him in a manner worthy of the vestry-room and the fish-market. Gillot, though saddened, by the approaching death of his friend Tardif, could not help taking pleasure in the honest woman's vivid and picturesque

eloquence. Father Dequet, who would fain have pushed aside the fishwife, to reach the sick bed, or rather the picture-gallery, was sharply repulsed. Then was the commencement of a difficult struggle for the reverend father, for the fishwife placed in front her formidable charms, which ought to shock a holy Jesuit. He departed, resolved soon to return with an army of lawyers. Gillot had written to Tardif's relations. The brother of the dead man, happening to be on a journey to Paris, came to call upon him the very day of his death. Gillot informed him of all that had passed, and advised him to commence proceedings against the Jesuits, for the recovery of the pictures, being persuaded that *so respectable a body*, would never dare defend such an action. "If you recover your pictures," said the fishwife, "you will give me one by my friend, Gillot, which represents an incantation, and I will consider myself well paid, for my care of your brother."—"For me," said Gillot, "I am not so easily contented, I demand a dozen bottles of old Burgundy, to bewitch myself with a dozen times, before I shall die."

What I have just narrated, is but the preface of a celebrated trial, to be found in the twelfth volume of the edition of Riché, the parliament advocate who collected the pleadings in all the curious trials of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.*

* This edition, dated 1776, was published at Amsterdam, by Marc-Michel Rey. The affair of the hundred and one pictures occupies twenty-seven pages — 445 to 470.

“After three audiences, of two hours each, the reverend Jesuit fathers of the Novitiate, were condemned to restore the pictures, and to pay the value of those which they alleged to be lost. The judgment was rendered on the 9th of August, 1729. There was no appeal.

“There were remarked among the witnesses, the *sieur* Gillot, painter to the opera, and the *demoiselle* Marie Anne Vatout, fishwife, who were considered to be the best advocates of the heirs.”

The pictures reverted to the heirs, who had a sale of them, which made some noise at the time. What has become of those masterpieces, so cherished by Tardif, the light of his eyes and the joy of his heart? Have they made the tour of the world? It is the history of the affiliation, and migration of nations. I have fallen in with a head, full of light and spirit, unsigned, but which betrays the gay, rich brush of Gillot—this prodigal, who supped with courtesans, till the very evening of life. On the back of the panel are to be distinctly read the words—COLLECTION TARDIF. Poor man! If he knew that his joys and sorrows have been appreciated—more than a hundred years after his death!

MILLE. DE MARIVAUX.

THE PRAISE OF FOLLY.

I.

MADAME DE BEZ, a widow of a certain age, pretty and coquettish, was very desirous of being thought a wit. She wished, toward the close of the regency, to continue to some extent, the traditions of the hotel Rambouillet. Marivaux was pre-eminently the oracle of her circle; he was compelled to follow her everywhere, even to the country. She often took him to her estate of Bez in Burgundy.

Although madame de Bez was still attractive, as some women are under their autumnal sun, Marivaux had never regarded her, except as a companion. Madame de Bez on her side, provided that she could discuss for three or four hours a day, some still undecided points, in the metaphysics of the heart, fancied she had not wasted her time. It will be understood, that persons so accomplished in the philosophy of love, never thought of loving each other.

In 1721, during the summer, Marivaux was at the châteaude Bez; the mistress of the place had collected around her certain Parisians and provincials; the chateau was very animated; madame de Bez and Marivaux had not lost their habit of disputing on points of profane theology. One day, when they had stopped, like two solitary philosophers, under a grove of elms in the park, a young girl of Sens, Mademoiselle Julie Duriez, intrusted by her mother to madame de Bez, curious as we all are at eighteen, could not refrain, on seeing them under the grove, from hovering in the neighborhood, to listen to them.

"So you persist in speaking ill of us!" said madame de Bez.

"Yes, madame," replied Marivaux, "when any one extols a woman to me, and the love which he has for her, I fancy myself beholding a madman, praising the viper who has bitten him. The viper only takes our life, women ravish from us our liberty, our reason, our repose; they ravish us from ourselves and leave us to live; are we not men in good condition? Men in love are intoxicated slaves. And to whom do these slaves belong? To women. And what is a woman?"

"To define her, it is necessary to know her."

"Our age may commence the definition, but I maintain, that we shall not have its completion, before the end of the world."

"Come, the science of the heart belongs only to

woman. You men have an idea, that you possess delicacy, and you plan modes of tenderness. A woman does not desire to be either tender or delicate, and she is both without knowing it. Look at her when she loves and does not wish to say so : does your most noisy affection approach the love which pervades her silence? Without the spur of pleasure what is your heart? A true paralytic. Whereas, the heart of a woman imparts its own impulse to itself; it starts off at a word spoken, at a word not spoken. The vocation of a woman is to drive the most sensible man mad. On the other hand, a woman is always a child; people amuse her with fairy tales. It must be confessed, monsieur de Marivaux, that we have passed many seasons without understanding one another. There would be a much simpler means of convincing you of the merit of women; that would be to address your heart, which does not agree with a word which your mind utters. I am very sure, that if Mademoiselle Julie were here in my place, you would not be seeking for complaints against women. Come, to punish you, I must force you to become happy, by marrying."

The young girl who was within ear-shot, fled blushing and confused, without well knowing why.

A few days after, Marivaux met this young girl in a path in the park.

Before going farther, I reproduce this portrait which the poet has left us of her. "Julie, without

being beautiful, is a very pleasing brunette ; she has a certain style of face, the features of which have a certain indescribable irregularity, which are all the more pleasing for not being regularly beautiful. I have always called such physiognomies agreeable fancies of nature, which never amuse the eyes but at the expense of the heart. Yes, there are a distinct class of these physiognomies which resemble nothing else ; we like to look at them, without bethinking ourselves to be on our guard ; we see them with sincere pleasure, which does not forewarn us of what it is. There are showy faces which are declared dangerous ; when one comes to love them, one has not been their dupe, the matter had been foreseen ; but the physiognomies of which I speak raise no disquiet ; nothing at first can be more familiar ; their charm acts without display, it gives the heart no warning, and one is thoroughly surprised to find one's self in love without having had the least premonition."

Now, Marivaux saluted Julie in the park, with one of those involved sentences, which madame de Bez alone had the art of understanding. Julie, who had not the key to this artificial language, made no answer ; she cast down her eyes and blushed. Marivaux who had not until then noticed her, decided that she was charming. He continued to talk to her ; she continued to make no reply. He at last felt that this silence was eloquent. He soon found nothing to say himself, so far did his words appear to him to

be below his thoughts. For the first time in his life, his heart was seriously troubled. During the whole week he lived for Julie, without daring to say anything to her.

This man, who had passed the ten fairest years of his life, in studying the metaphysics of the heart, suddenly felt himself the most ignorant lover of the world. Love is not a science, it is a revelation. The apparition of a face which charms, makes more light sparkle in the heart, than all the reflections of the philosophers and the poets.

“What is the matter with you?” said madame de Bez to Marivaux one day, “you have become sad and silent.”

“Sad!” said Marivaux, with an exclamation, “what, madame, do I give no evidence of all my joy? Does not my silence tell you, that I am in love!”

“In love! I do not believe a word of it; however, love is the god of miracles.”

“So deeply in love, madame, that if I dared, I should ask this very moment for the hand of Mademoiselle Julie.”

“Come,” said madame de Bez, “one must never despair; I will go and ask Mademoiselle Julie for you in marriage.”

The same day, madame de Bez, knowing that Marivaux and Mademoiselle Julie were alone in the saloon, was desirous, out of love for philosophy, to

know what was the language of Marivaux in love. She was very much surprised at hearing Marivaux speak with a simplicity, worthy of the first ages of the world. "You are beautiful and I love you," was all he had to say.

In narrating this story, he used to say: "I had become too stupid to say more." He doubtless meant to say in his rage for involution, "I had become too intellectual."

Mademoiselle Julie had loved Marivaux at first sight, but she had not avowed her love to herself until the afternoon, when under the grove of elms in the park, she had overheard the strange conversation reported above. She was the daughter of an attorney of Sens, who had lately died, leaving scarcely any estate. Her mother had known madame de Bez for a long time, and intrusted Julie to her for the season.

Madame de Bez had no trouble in gaining the consent of the mother and daughter to the marriage, which Marivaux proposed. The ceremony was performed at the château. Once married, Marivaux returned to Paris, fearing to lose his happiness in the brilliant and gay company of the château de Bez. In this he showed wisdom, for liberty is needed for happiness. He made a home for himself very calm, very quiet, pervaded by laborious study and restless love.

But Marivaux had never discovered the secret of

being happy, from his deplorable habit of microscopic study of passion. His wife had all the charms of the heart, of simplicity and grace. She loved him with touching tenderness ; she was the life, the smile, the joy of the house ; he was not rich, but she was content with little. She soon gave him a daughter, who was to enliven still more this happy household. He had happiness under his hand, but the blind philosopher did not become conscious of it, until the death of his wife, eighteen months after his marriage. During these eighteen months, he had lost his time in searching after the philosophy of happiness.

II.

EIGHTEEN years from that time a young girl of aerial beauty was pensively walking in the park. It was mademoiselle de Marivaux.

She was passing up and down an avenue of centenarian linden-trees. At the end of this avenue she paused an instant, and raised her eyes toward a mountain, whence were heard, at intervals, the sound of a horn and the baying of the hounds. There was a grand hunt in the woods of the château. Mademoiselle de Marivaux was like the women imagined by her father, more beautiful in expression than in feature, in complexion than in contour. Her blue eyes and black hair had a sweet and charming effect. The marquis d'Argens speaks of a portrait of her,

painted by Largillière, of which he greatly admired the sparkling beauty and delicate freshness. She was a reed which was to bend at the first contrary wind.

While mademoiselle de Marivaux was thus walking to and fro, her father, seated on the terrace near madame de Bez, was pursuing his philosophic disputations. As he was no longer at an age to speak ill of women, he spoke ill of life.

"But," murmured suddenly madame de Bez, "if we should return to twenty years? if we should snatch again all our flown pleasure? Ah, youth! youth! All is there; for it is God who gives it to you. See my son, how happy he is out there in the woods, free, strong, ready for everything. Go and ask your daughter, who is dreaming somewhere or other, if, at her age, life is not a pleasant burden." If mademoiselle de Marivaux could have answered, she would have said: "Ah, yes, life is pleasant; I feel it in my heart, which beats when the horn resounds in the mountain: yes, life is beautiful; I see it as it smiles upon me in the trees and in the flowers; and I hear it speaking to me in the notes of the singing-birds, in the fountain gurgling so pure and fresh." Perhaps, imitating the style of her father, mademoiselle de Marivaux would have added: "Yes, life is beautiful; I see it as it smiles upon me in the morning in my mirror, when I comb my long locks."

Madame de Bez had a son, who was to inherit an immense fortune on the death of his grandmother.

Madame de Bez, while passing all her time in declaiming against human vanities, had all the prejudices of vanity and greatness. When she talked with Marivaux, or some other would-be philosopher, she maintained that the joy of the heart was all the fortune that was to be sought for here below; but when she was planning by herself, it was in an entirely different point of view. We shall thus see how madame de Bez and Marivaux, who passed for sages, made their children happy, after having forgotten to make themselves so.

In the evening, on returning from the chase, M. Guillaume de Bez, a young man of twenty, who had not yet spoiled, by airs of quality, his frank and engaging though somewhat rustic manners, was approaching the château through the park. Mademoiselle de Marivaux happened to be in the way, doubtless by chance—chance is so well disposed toward youths and maidens.

“Ah, it is you,” said mademoiselle de Marivaux, turning pale; “what a trim you are in!”—“You know how it is: sharp rocks, thorns, and swamps. Just a little while ago, in order to return in the direction of the park, I almost had to swim; but, thank Heaven! we had good sport.”

Saying these words, Guillaume de Bez presented a bunch of strawberries to mademoiselle de Marivaux. “I recollected,” he continued, “as I entered the wood, that we last year passed a whole morning

in picking strawberries with a thoroughly pastoral enjoyment. We were happy about nothing, like children."

At this instant, one of the friends of Guillaume de Bez called him away a little distance; mademoiselle gave him a parting nod and withdrew. She returned to the château, went to her room, and began to cry. "He does not love me," said she, pensively; "he had to return to the woods and see the strawberries again, to recall that fresh morning which has been my whole life for a year. . . . Did not my life then commence?" She took the bunch of strawberries, and breathed on it with a sadness full of charm.

"However," continued she, drying her tears, "he could not have gathered a bouquet for me which could have been sweeter than this."

The bell having rung for supper, she placed the bouquet in a glass and descended to the saloon. The supper was somewhat quiet; the hunt had fatigued the young people; Marivaux and madame de Bez could find nothing more to disagree upon; mademoiselle de Marivaux thought that she was not loved.

After supper, when madame de Bez and Guillaume found themselves alone, the young man asked his mother if mademoiselle de Marivaux was to remain much longer at the château.

"Her father is expected at the academy to attend a reception."

"And he wishes to take his daughter with him?"

"Doubtless; besides, the season is nearly over."

"She will not go, for, since I must tell you, I love her and wish to marry her."

"You are mad"

"Not at all. Is it madness to love a beautiful girl?"

Madame de Bez saw well that the matter was not to be reasoned a'out. She went straight to the chamber of mademoiselle de Marivaux.

"My dear child, Guillaume loves you; it is a piece of folly; you are about returning to Paris, but, before your departure, make Guillaume see that you would not love him, even if you were not going to enter a convent."

"A convent!" exclaimed mademoiselle de Marivaux, who was, at one and the same time, overcome by the joy of hearing that she was loved, and by the grief of hearing mention made of that tomb, darker than the other, in which they wished to bury her youth.

"Your father has not, then, informed you that he wished to shelter you, in this blessed refuge, from all the dangers of the world? The duke d'Orleans is to pay your portion."

"My portion!" murmured the young girl in a stifled voice. "Yes, madame, my father has spoken to me of the convent, but—but I had forgotten it. . . ."

Mademoiselle de Marivaux did not sleep at all during the night; the next day, at sunrise, on open-

ing her window, she saw Guillaume setting out on horseback.

"Where is he going?" she asked herself, pressing her hand on her heart.

At the turn of the road he looked back and perceived the young girl. He made her a graceful motion of the hand.

"Alas!" said she, "it is perhaps a signal of farewell." She followed him with her eyes; when he disappeared among the trees, she fell on her knees and prayed fervently. "And yet he loves me," she said after having prayed.

III.

SHE did not see Guillaume again. Madame de Bez, fearing some whim of his, had sent him to a friend's house in the neighborhood. He was to return the next day; but, the next day, madame de Bez went and joined him with the news that M. de Marivaux and mademoiselle de Marivaux had started for Paris the evening before. Guillaume wanted to mount his horse and follow the young girl; he swore that he would find her again, or die of vexation. Madame de Bez, who understood men well, let her son talk. She promised, besides, to plead his cause before mademoiselle de Marivaux when they returned to Paris. Guillaume, thanks to the pleasures of the season, waited with a little patience:

Le adored mademoiselle de Marivaux; but hunting is so good for restless minds.

When he returned to Paris, six weeks after, mademoiselle de Marivaux was at the convent *du Trésor*. He wished to see her; he attempted to carry her off. He had not even the consolation of knowing whether his thoroughly impassioned letters had reached her.

Marivaux, who pretended to read all hearts, did not notice that his daughter was in love. "It is astonishing," he wrote after his first visit to the convent, "how solitude and prayer make a woman grow pale. The poor little thing was so blooming before she entered the *Trésor*! Oh, my God! by what joys on high dost thou repay these human sacrifices. It is not alone the heart and liberty which are laid at thy feet. The virgins immolate to thee their beauty and the sweet glow of their youth." At a second visit, seeing his daughter more pale and exhausted, Marivaux asked her if the sacrifice was above her strength. "No," she replied, clasping her hands.

But was she thinking of heaven, or of Guillaume de Bez? She did not succumb under the first blow; Marivaux saw her return to herself; her resignation had even a certain character of melancholy joy.

"I am going to take the veil," she said to him one day; "I feel myself equal to the act; I shall

have the strength to withdraw without regret from the shore of life, as our Canticles express it."

She doubtless sought to blind herself. The solemn day arrived. In the morning, as her father saw her in tears, she told him that they were tears of joy. Madame de Bez arrived: it was time for robing; the veil was brought; Madame de Bez chose to place it herself on that charming head, which she should have crowned with roses less pale. The bell rang. Mademoiselle de Marivaux threw herself into her father's arms.—"I am going to die," she said with calmness; "adieu, my mother awaits me." Marivaux, who never understood natural language, fancied that she spoke figuratively.

The superior preceded the young virgin, who was whiter than death. On reaching the altar, it was necessary to support her. She received the congratulations of the priest, who had come to bless her. To all questions she answered "yes" in a sepulchral voice.

When his daughter was seized to be placed under the pall, Marivaux was no longer able to remain in the chapel. He went out wiping away his tears. By a singular chance, he met an actress at the door of the *Thrésor*, Mademoiselle Sylvia, of the *Comédie-Italienne*.

"You weep, Marivaux."

"Yes, but I have just accomplished a good work, I have saved my daughter from the perils of this

world; at this very moment she is devoted to heaven."

"What an idea!"

"You know that I had no portion to give her."

"Was she not pretty? Ah! Marivaux, is liberty, then, nothing, philosopher that you are?"

"I have reflected upon it since her birth; I have studied all, compared all: the joys of this world are drowned in tears."

"And you do not count, then, the pleasure of weeping? Go! you are not a man, you are only a philosopher."

IV.

A FEW days afterward, Marivaux returned for the last time to the château de Bez. At the sight of the branches swayed by the free air, the passing birds, the bubbling springs, the verdant fields, the golden harvest, the reddening vine-clusters, did he not think, with a throb of the heart, of the narrow and sombre cell where his daughter was praying and weeping?

Guillaume de Bez, yielding to his mother's entreaties, resigned himself to marrying, unwillingly, mademoiselle de Riancourt, who never loved him.

Mademoiselle de Marivaux did not long survive her heart. She died at twenty. Her father wept for her; but he soon consoled himself by the reflection that his daughter had died in peace of heart and in the love of God.

LA TOUR.

I.

THE portrait-painter who has best succeeded in, withdrawing my mind from the hubbub of the present time, by the radiant smile of the past, is La Tour—La Tour who painted all the pretty women, and grave philosophers of the eighteenth century. La Tour who was a sage and a fool, a true republican of the true republic.

He was born in the first years of the eighteenth century, and died among the first tempests of the revolution (1704–1788); how many different reigns had he seen pass! Louis XIV., the Regency, Madame de Parabère, Louis XV., Madame de Pompadour, Madame Dubarry, Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette—without counting the reign of Voltaire, who is the true sovereign of the eighteenth century, if it is understood as closing with the revolution.

La Tour was born at Saint-Quentin, the capital of the Vermandois, a laborious and intelligent city, which

has given Ramus to France. The street in which La Tour died, bears at the present day his name. His father was a musician, of the chapter of the collegiate church. He was one of those simple-minded artists, who are happy to live forgotten in study and leisure, a true German musician, like those whom Master Hoffman has sketched on the walls of his smoking-room—not precisely Krespel—less sentiment, less impulse, but more gayety, and more freedom from care.

His godmother had commended him to the patron of the city, the great Saint-Quentin, by giving him this poetical name. Happily in past ages, men were contented with rendering their surname illustrious without disquieting themselves about their Christian name. La Tour left his to Saint-Quentin. He studied away at Latin and Greek, until he was eighteen. A pastel of Rosalba, drew from him the revealing cry of Correggio. He never had any other master than this magic vision. He was desirous of going to Venice, to ask from San Marco, the hand of Rosalba, but he had no money. One morning, however, he bid adieu to his father and his father's violin—that sweet violin which had unconsciously given a poetical turn to the early follies of his heart—"Where are you going to?"—"I do not know, but I am going."—"What folly."—"Is not the bird, when he feels his wings flutter, right in launching in to space? Christopher Columbus was a fool, too, when

he set out to discover a New World?"—"As you please ; for my part, the universe is bounded by my door-sill ; but I have too much philosophy to condemn you to a prison, though it were in the house of your birth, the house in which your mother died, and your young sister sings. Adieu. When you shall have discovered a new world, the noisy world of intellect, where one has not the time to live with one's heart, you will return, perhaps to ask for a little quiet at my chimney-corner. I, in my simplicity, compare the world to the opera : all this noise, all these lights, all this splendor, all these great airs, are not worth a little strain of old Lully, played in the evening at my window, on my poor violin, before my wild gillyflower, when the sun is shedding his last ray."—"It is true," said La Tour, who had had as it were, a vision of the future, "I shall go to Paris, I shall become rich there, everybody will acknowledge my talent, I shall be first painter to the king ; but, perhaps in the midst of my unhoped-for triumph, my sole joy will be to listen in recollection, to this sweet violin, which holds the secret of my heart."—"Adieu."

La Tour wiped away a tear and departed. There were still in the eighteenth century, quite a number of schools of painting in existence in the provinces. Painters went to Rome, passed some time at Paris ; but returned with a love of their country, to enrich the humble school from which they had set out.

Rheims, thanks to the coronations of the kings, cultivated luxury; the flower of luxury is Art. There was an entire company of painters at Rheims, some paid by the churches and convents, others by families who wished portraits. From Saint-Quentin to Rheims is not far. La Tour, not daring at first to venture himself in Paris, with an at least doubtful talent, since he had had no masters, went at first to Rheims to try his powers: there, after some portraits, as he was about to start for Paris, he was seized with the good idea, that it was always more profitable, in painting, to study the dead than the living. He had seen a picture by Rubens and he went to Flanders.

On arriving at Cambray, his landlady, who was pretty and worth listening to, recommended him to stop in this city, in which the European diplomacy was at that time assembled. Although a thorough artist, La Tour was not a peasant of the Danube, or a gipsy living on chance. He was a painter, who had been well brought up, as some there are—I do not defend them. He loved fine clothes, the gay world, fashionable manners, and fashionable conversation. Eight days after his arrival at Cambray, his talents were talked of, eight days more and they talked of his genius. He was soon as much sought after as Largillière himself had been, on arriving at Paris. La Tour thought it best not to say that he came from Saint-Quentin. The English ambassador delighted with his pastels and charmed with his rep-

artees, offered at once to take him to London, to his own mansion, where his family should be the painter's as well. He was to set out soon. La Tour was pondering his answer to this enthusiastic friendship, when a little adventure of gallantry occurred, to settle the question summarily.

It may be affirmed, that La Tour was a lover during half his life; he lived to eighty; usually, as he was not married, he was, according to Greuze, a poacher, subsisting on matrimony. At Cambrai, he met in a diplomatic circle with a young married lady, much more Spanish than French or Flemish, some posthumous daughter of a Don Juan, in search of adventures. She was very pretty and very coquettish, she loved society; but like many of the women of the north and of the south, had no serious passion for any one but herself. She had married a provincial squire who was passionately fond of her and made her believe now and then, that she loved him. La Tour had no doubt of this conquest. She listened to him at first with a charming smile, but she soon answered him by a peal of laughter. Although gayety in love might be of bad augury, La Tour did not retrace his steps. Out of coquetry, she permitted him to paint her. She found herself so beautiful in La Tour's pastel, that she was a little less cruel to him. For his part, he who finished a portrait in three sittings, was three weeks retouching her hands. The husband was not always on hand.

Squire as he was, he dabbled a little in commerce, citing in excuse the nobility of Venice. He preserved the virtue of his wife, by dint of money and love, as others do by dint of love and intellect. La Tour became so much emboldened, that he was desirous to carry off the lady.

"No," said she to him, casting down her eyes, "it is I who will carry you off. Be under my windows at midnight."—"How, a silken ladder?"—"Silence; you shall see."

La Tour was a man of too good society to ask where the husband would be. He contented himself with saying that he would be under the lady's windows at midnight with his sword.

Scarcely had he returned to his hotel, when the waiting-maid of the lady—a pretty Flemish girl, as chubby as the Diana of Jordaens—came to inform him that all was arranged for the adventure. "You will enter by the window."—"But your lady's bedchamber is in the second story; how can I enter by the window?"—"Nothing more simple, you will see. I come here to advise you to be as still as a statue."

The mysterious air of the girl excited La Tour somewhat. He thought that the night would be stormy.

"After all," said he as he gave her a gold crown, "I shall console myself gayly if I mistake the door in my journey, provided I come across this pretty

Flemish girl, all fresh and rosy—a drop of wine on a snowball.”

Midnight, however, strikes; all the bells of Cambray sing his victory and echo the beating of his heart. The servant-maid opens a little window, and makes a sign to him to get into an open basket placed against the house and attached to a cord. This basket had long been employed to make the journey from the ground-floor to the garret, as is common in many places. La Tour thought that his dignity was compromised; but, when one is in love and carries a sword, one does not stop for such considerations. He mounted bravely into this aerial car and commended himself to the white doves of Venus. The creaking sound of the pulley did not succeed in reminding him of the prosaic reality of the journey. He mounts, and mounts, and mounts. Now he touches the summit of Hymettus. He sees through the damask curtains the outlines of an adored form. It is she. She comes to him, draws aside the curtain—at last! He is about to seize her hand. The moon appears to illuminate this page of romance, which, at a later period, Fragonard wrote for the gallery of La Guimard. Ah! but the lady is beautiful in her elegant dishabille, with her locks falling in cascades on the embrowned marble of her shoulder! La Tour already attains the balustrade of the little balcony: another ascending movement of the robust Flemish girl, and he is at the ideal

VOL. I.—14

paradise of adventure-seekers; but the movement is in a contrary direction. He descends again in spite of himself, and behold him six feet from Paradise. It is truly life and its ascensions! As soon as we touch the skies, we go down again before we have drunk of the aroma in which the angels revel.

"Well, Monsieur La Tour!" said the lady with a surprised air, "you don't come?"—"Confound it! Jeanneton, you don't know what you are about," cried La Tour to the Flemish girl.—"Hush," said the lady, "you will wake up my husband."—"Well, madame, inform the girl yourself, or descend with me. See, here I am, like Tantalus."

At this instant, another window opened. The squire leaned out and cried, "Who's there?" La Tour drew his sword.

"Who's there?" asked the husband again.—"I wish to preserve the anonymous," replied La Tour, without knowing any too well what to do.—"Whoever you are," continued the husband, "I wish you a good night in this new-fashioned bed."

At the same instant, the window of the lady and the window of the gentleman closed as if they had obeyed the same thought.

La Tour had too much sense not to recognise in all this a comedy played with him and against him. But if they would only drop the curtain! He was on a stage full of traps. He could neither go nor come, mount nor descend.

"Here I am," said he, "taking a lesson on free-will. After all, man is the toy of destiny. I have no more liberty of action in life than in this occurrence. This Flemish girl who has hold of the cord is one of the thousand forms of fatality. This cord is the thread of my life."

After half an hour of philosophy, La Tour got angry. He was born a reasoner; in any event he commenced by discussion with himself. "What!" exclaimed he suddenly, "I have a sword and can not avenge myself!"

He measured with his eye all the distances. He could not touch the wall, he was fifteen feet from the ground; nothing was left him but patience. He however informed the husband that he intended to pull his house down if he did not give orders for his deliverance. The husband reopened the window, and charitably informed him, that if he made a noise, all the neighbors would be out, and he would be hissed at for being a bashful lover. La Tour continued to exercise philosophy; it was a fine night in July, whose quiet was disturbed only by merry chimes, some rusty weathercocks, a whistle now and then from the wind, and the elegies of the cats in the gutters. La Tour—will it be believed?—ended by going to sleep.

When he awoke it was morning; peasants were driving their donkeys to the market-place, for it was market day.

"Bastien, do you not see some one up there holding his sword in that vegetable basket?"—"Is it carnival now, in the middle of July?"—"It is Don Quixote fighting with the windmills."

On rousing himself, La Tour saw with fright his delicate position. The laughter of the peasants attracted the attention of the neighbors; there was a general hurrah all along the street. All the rag-muffins in town were gathered in front of the house when the Flemish girl let the lover down to the pavement.

"Where did you come from?"—"From the canopy of the sky."—"From the canopy of the bed!" said a roguish wag.

This joke saved La Tour: the hisses were turned on the husband. The poor man had prepared with much care the scenic arrangement of this comedy; it was no use for him to try and take the side of the laughers: he was soon compelled to leave the city. Public sentiment is always in the right.

Meanwhile, the very day of the adventure, La Tour had left for London, with letters of recommendation from the English ambassador. Fame and fortune awaited him in this capital, where Reynolds, "the only English painter," was yet but a child. Almost on his arrival he received this note:

"Since I see you no more, I love you. Since you have left, I have sought for you."

It was the squire's wife. O singularity of the

heart! She was at first amused by the malicious tricks her husband played La Tour. But that very night, when La Tour was expiating the crime of having loved her, she promised herself to avenge La Tour. The night was so beautiful! "If, after all," she said to herself, "he had cleared the balustrade, and I had fallen swooning into his arms!"

Returning to the window, she had half opened it; she leaned over the balcony as if to console La Tour; perhaps—who knows?—to seize the rope and draw toward the wall the aerial vessel; but La Tour was asleep.

At London La Tour was on the look-out, for the note indicated no other than a chance-rendezvous. One morning he was ordered by Lady B—— to take her portrait: Lady B—— was the amorous lady. It is not related whether he took her portrait. What is without doubt, is, that he passed three years in singing to her that she was beautiful, through the entire gamut of love. This pretty woman, perfectly Spanish in form and heart, learned to paint in pastel, and gave more than one good lesson to her master in the Art of Love! Love is to the study of art what philosophy is to the study of languages—it is the pediment of the temple, the commencement of the work, its final word.

Meanwhile, he used to say that it was nearer from London to Paris than from Saint-Quentin to Paris. He embarked for France with a few handfuls of

gold, not doubting his star. On arriving at Paris, he gave out that he was an English painter travelling for amusement. He presented himself at the studio of Largillière, one day, when Voltaire was sitting. La Tour, who had studied at London all the philosophical theses then afloat, began by astonishing Voltaire by the power of his reasoning. "And I, too, am a painter," said he to Largillière, "but I am only an English painter, a true hap-hazard dauber. See, now!" In his turn, he set to work to paint Voltaire. After two hours' work and conversation, Largillière exclaimed: "Ah, my lord, I shall go and learn to paint at London!"—"And I," said Voltaire, "shall go there to learn to think."

II.

A HUNDRED years ago, the Anglomania was the fashionable disease. Men lived in France, walked about in Italy, loved in Spain, thought in England. The word "Englishman" was equivalent to philosopher. Our last marquises, therefore, all made the tour to England, to learn there to think—"about horses!" said Louis XV., who was a man of wit—"among kings."

La Tour made his entrance into society with a great prestige; he styled himself an Englishman, made a great noise with his gold and his philosophy, had talent and a good form. Voltaire had hardly

time to recommend him, so sudden was the growth of the new-comer's reputation.

Mignard was the first in France to paint women, not as they were, but as they would be; it was the triumph of the falsehood of art. La Tour soon attained a still higher triumph: he painted women as they were and as they would be. Pastel gave him all the lilies, all the roses, all the smiles. It was the truth, for all that—but the truth as seen by the poet or the lover; the truth as seen by the painter under the ray of poetry or of love. What splendor! what transparency! what light! When the spectator entered the gallery of La Tour, he asked himself at first, at the sight of these admirable forms which seemed detached from an ideal gallery, if it was the studio of a painter or of a fairy; but he almost instantaneously recognised a human accent in all these charming heads. It was the fairy work of art, and not that of the Orientals. Mignard is merely a false good painter with his brushes; La Tour, with his crayons, is a serious painter, who attains effect, color, and character.

No one can doubt the variety of the human form; it is a harpsichord which accords with all sentiments and all ideas. You have seen more than one flash of intellect on the face of a fool; I have seen more than one expression of folly in the face of a man of talent. The face is the window to which all the passions of soul and body come for breath. "Give

me," said D'Aguesseau, "two lines of a man's writing, and I will hang him." For my part, I would say: "Show me a man's face for two hours, and I will write the history of his passions."

The great portrait-painter is he who makes the harpsichord vocal, who seizes the moment when the face is lit up by a fine thought as the window is by a ray of the sun. There is no face which has not its moment of beauty. Ugliness itself has, so to speak, its souvenirs of a world where all is beauty. "When one remembers," said madame du Deffant to La Tour before her circle of wits "and sensible women," "when one reflects that you have succeeded in making something passably pretty out of madame du Châtelet, one must admit before such a metamorphosis the magic of painting; for it is, for all that, the portrait of madame du Châtelet."—"Yes," said La Tour, "and I confess to you, madame, that I like my portrait of the marchioness better than the one which you have painted in your style."—"They are both likenesses."—"Recall yours to me."—"Represent to yourself a large and dry-looking woman, a school-mistress without hips; a narrow breast, and on it a little map of the world which is lost in space, great arms too short for her passions, feet like a crane, a head like an owl, a peaked nose, two little sea-green and grass-green eyes, complexion dark and red, mouth wide and scantily furnished with teeth. There you have the picture of the beautiful Emilie,

without speaking of the frame—trinkets, jewels, powder, and glass. You know that she wants to be beautiful in spite of nature and fortune. You know that she has not always a shift to her back.”—“Come, come,” said Madame Géoffrin, “we are getting into private matters.”

La Tour asked for paper and pencils. While the conversation was continued on the virtues of the beautiful Emilie, he attempted to recall this face, frightful under analysis, but charming from its spirit and expression. The portrait soon passed from hand to hand. Everybody recognised the mistress of Voltaire. “And yet,” said La Tour, “everybody has also recognised her under the sympathetic pencil of madame du Deffant. Here is the reason : in the most primitive form of nature there is art. There is not a forest, a mountain, a river, which has not a tone of mysterious poetry : I do not speak of flowers, which are purely matters of art. The fruits themselves are masterpieces of form and color. Can you imagine anything more perfect than a bunch of grapes or a peach ? It is not, therefore, astonishing that women, who are the coquetry of creation, should be a compound of nature and art, but one in which art has the advantage of nature. Paul Potter confessed that the cows, to some extent, struck attitudes before him. He, Paul Potter, simple-minded even to sublimity, and even to stupidity ! The women do not strike attitudes only before the painter and

the world, but before themselves. Thus, with an ill-formed mouth and lack-lustre eyes, they succeed, by the grace of their smile and the charm of their glance, in correcting nature. Madame du Châtelet is, you say, a schoolmistress; a schoolmistress if you will, but she teaches Love to read."

Every one said the painter was in the right.

The studio of La Tour was the most resorted to of all the studios of the eighteenth century. People came to it from the court. The *maréchal de Saxe*, met the prince of Conti there; Helvetius discussed there with Jean-Jacques Rousseau. La Tour went too largely into philosophy and politics. He had studied all the systems which have governed thoughts and nations from Plato to Cromwell, from Jesus Christ to Fenelon. He believed firmly, like all the encyclopedists, that France would, like England, have her revolution. More than once at Versailles, while painting Louis XV., or while painting a princess in the presence of the king, he allowed himself to give some indirect advice, some hints which were dangerous to give. It is La Tour who led the way for Louis the XV., to make the only good saying which history has recorded of him. "Sire," said he, in praising the policy of England to him, "we have no marine!"—"And those of Vernet, Monsieur La Tour!" replied the king, thus sending the painter back to his pastels, with much wit and dignity. Louis XV., however, liked La Tour, and was gener-

ally willing to acknowledge with him, that France would pass through a social regeneration. "But after me the deluge!" the king always remarked in winding up these conversations.

The painter one day passed in review all the illustrious captains of the last reigns. He paused at the *maréchal de Saxe*; Louis XV. recalled his victories and his heroism.

"And when one thinks, sire, that the *maréchal de Saxe*, after so many glorious days, has naught left but to drag through days of wretchedness! While he fought for his king and his country, he let his fortune go as it pleased Heaven, or rather his rascally agents who have ruined him."

"You might say that the *maréchal* has been ruined by the keepers of his privy purse."

"The fact remains, that the poor *maréchal* has nothing left but his sword, and that he came to me yesterday, to borrow a crown. Your majesty has offered me a pension of two thousand livres; I have thought it my duty to refuse, since I have more money than I need; but I beg you to grant this pension to the *maréchal de Saxe*. Only, instead of two thousand, give him two hundred thousand livres.

This time the advice of the pastel-painter was followed. The old *maréchal* was enabled to pay his creditors, and repurchase the diamonds, which had disappeared from the hilt of his sword. Under the last monarchy and under the republic there were not

many of those noble hearts to be found, who refuse pensions as an insult, when they are earning their bread, but who ask them for their friends.

For more than fifty years, La Tour had free entrance at the court of France.* He was always well received at Versailles, whether the queen was called Maria Leczinska, madame de Pompadour, madame du Barry, or Marie Antoinette. In the salons of Paris and Versailles he had the reputation of a good talker. He was listened to like Chamfort and Rivarol. If there be any curious inquirer of these times, who sighs for those guilty and charming times of the reign of Marie Antoinette, when the ambitious had no other care than to sup in gay and fine company, I should propose to him to follow La Tour to the residence of madame de Coigny, madame de Grammont, or some other celebrated hotel—hotel Rambouillet, minus the *précieuses* and the jargon—we shall find in a circle around the fireplace, three or four beauties—people were always beautiful then, either by their wit, their gayety, their gallantry, or in fine by their beauty, which was after all the simplest and best means; we should meet scattered about the salon, some wits like Rivarol and Rulhières, an abbé and a marquis. They would begin by talking politics—that is to say, to talk about the court. It was

* He was however the courtier of no one. "My talent is my own," said he. He would never consent to finish the portrait of the king's two sisters, because they had kept him waiting.

the politics of Cythera. Madame de Coigny would make a signal with her fan to Chamfort; madame de Grammont would call Rulhières; Rivarol would be already seated alongside of madame de Vaudreuil. —“What is talked about at Versailles?” —“About the abbé Maury who, under pretext of preaching the gospel there, has been giving the king lessons in political economy, and some advice in regard to foreign and domestic diplomacy. ‘It is a pity,’ said his majesty in coming out of church; ‘if the abbé Maury had said a little to us about religion, he would have spoken about everything.’”

RIVAROL. I thought that the king had never said anything.

MADAME DE VAUDREUIL. Rulhières is pensive.

RULHIÈRES. I am afraid of falling in love.

MADAME DE GRAMMONT. Love is like epidemic diseases, the more one is afraid of it, the more is one exposed to it.

RIVAROL. And I, for my part, ask but one thing from the neighboring echoes: it is to fall in love.

LA TOUR. Take care, monsieur de Rivarol, the commerce of men with women, resembles that which the Europeans carry on in India; it is a warlike one. You are no longer at the present day in the age of heroism.

MADAME DE COIGNY. M. de Rivarol has contended too long behind the scenes at the opera, against the Bacchantes who have a price, only because they sell

themselves. There is a chorus-singer there, who can find those to buy her, and who could find no one to give herself to.

RIVAROL (*with an impertinent emphasis*). I have quitted the opera-girls, because I found as much falsehood among them, as among the honest women.

MADAME DE GRAMMONT (*with a cunning smile*).—That was at the time of your marriage, after so much living flame, smoke has followed.

CHAMFORT. Rivarol was a philosopher who abandoned romance for history ; but he returned forthwith to romance. Divorce is so natural, that in many houses it sleeps every night, between the husband and wife.

MADAME DE VAUDREUIL. M. de Rivarol has doubtless suffered the misfortune of being too much loved. He who is loved too much, loves no more. As soon as the balance inclines, all is lost.

THE MARQUIS. And what is the saddest, is, that it is with the sentiments of the heart as with benefits. When we no longer hope to be able to repay them, we fall into ingratitude.

MADAME DE COIGNY. Every benefit which is not dear to the heart, is odious. It is a holy relic, or a bone of a dead man ; we must either enshrine it, or tread it under our feet.

RIVAROL. It seems to me that you are very quietly calumniating me. My whole crime is that of having married one woman, and run away with another,

without leaving the first the means of subsistence. What is certain, is, that the academy have given her a prize for virtue, for the sole object of displeasing myself. It is therefore to me that she owes it. But do not recall to me, that I have been the husband of my wife.

THE MARQUIS. One of the best reasons that a man can have for never marrying, is, that he is not completely the dupe of a woman, except when she is his own.

CHAMFORT. The condition of a husband has this that is odious, the husband who has the most wit, may be a superfluity everywhere, even in his own house, tiresome without opening his mouth, and appear ridiculous in uttering the simplest thing.

RULHIÈRES. No, I am not afraid of love, it is a fairy story, which conducts us always, like the little children, to the enchanted castle. But I am afraid of the women. Madame de S—— dishonored herself for a lover, whom she has ceased to love, because he removed his powder badly.

THE MARQUIS. Madame de F—— lost her name and her fortune for the chevalier de M——; now you know that she quitted the chevalier abruptly one day when he had put his stockings on, wrong side out.

CHAMFORT. In love, the most foolish are the most wise; the surest way to reason on this delicate point is to cease to reason.

THE ABBE. He who wrote the *Praise of Folly*

was a great philosopher. In love all is false, all is true. It is the only subject on which one can not utter an absurdity, even in the confessional.

MADAME DE COIGNY. Chamfort then lost his time when he wrote maxims on love?

CHAMFORT. Oh, heavens, yes! but besides that, maxims, though they were those of La Rochefoucault, are in the conduct of life what routine is in the art; with them there can be nothing adventurous, nothing unforeseen, none of these charming follies—

MADAME DE GRAMMONT. Which are nothing perhaps but wisdom disguised.

LA TOUR. However, if pleasure depends upon illusion, happiness reposes on truth. Does it not appear to you, that the man who is happy in illusion, has his fortune only in fluctuating stocks, while he who is happy in truth, has his in real estate?

MADAME DE COIGNY. And how about hail-storms? and fire? and inundation? and taxes? and famine? and the farmer's wife? and the farmer's children?

THE ABBE. This is patient and passive happiness. It reminds me of the Indian proverb: It is better to be seated, than standing, to be lying down than seated, but it is better to be dead than either.

LA TOUR. When the ancients represented happiness crowned with olive-leaves, they were thinking of the happiness which sleeps in a tomb. Those who destroy their passions, as a violent man kills his horse, not being able to manage him, are madmen

who do not comprehend that life has its furious joys as death has its peaceful ones.

CHAMFORT. For my part, I subscribe to the proverb, and I say, "Who quits the game, wins it."

MADAME DE GRAMMONT. Because you live by recollection, because you are still a lover, by thinking that you have been one. It is useless for a man to withdraw himself from the world, we always live by life and not by death.

MADAME DE VAUDREUIL. I begin to think, that no one among us is in love, except the abbé, for we have this evening talked only of love.

MADAME DE COIGNY. We wanted to talk politics.

CHAMFORT. Conversations resemble journeys on the water; we withdraw from the land almost without being sensible of it; we do not perceive that we have quitted the shore, until we are far away from it.

Every one who bore a glorious name, no matter by what title, from the regency to the revolution, was painted by La Tour; men of the court, men of the church, men of the sword, men of letters, women of society, women of the theatre, virtue of every degree, all passed through the studio of this charming painter, who was the true historian of the eighteenth century.

He had retired to Auteuil; he wished to die there; but at eighty he became homesick. He had not forgotten his good city of Saint-Quentin. He had founded there a gratuitous school of design. Born

charitable and a republican, he was desirous that he should not be remembered for his talents, but for his beneficence. At Saint-Quentin, the poor little children, the women lying-in without a home, the aged without shelter, repeated his name with gratitude. He had placed more than a hundred thousand francs at the disposition of the mayor of the city, for these works of charity. He had poured into the treasury, fifty thousand francs for the foundation of a school of design. When spoken to of his benevolence, he replied like Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "One has done nothing, when anything remains to be done."

He left for Saint-Quentin. "I wish," said he to Gluck, "to go and press to my heart, the violin of my father, for, as the Germans say, he has left his soul there."

He was received at Saint-Quentin, the republican city, as Louis XIV. would not have been. The twenty-first of June, 1784, his arrival was announced there; this day is historical. Here, among other accounts, is one of a witness of the festival, M. de Bucelly d'Estrées, who, scarcely ten years ago, read it at the academy of Saint-Quentin: "The entire population quitted their occupations, everything wore a holyday air, the young girls crowned themselves with flowers, the city cannon roared, the city chimes made the air resound with its joyous peals. The ancient street of La Vignette was choked up, every one strove to be the first to greet him. The munici

pal body with the mayor, the true elect of the people, offered to La Tour the tribute of the public gratitude, a crown of oak-leaves. La Tour, who had refused a royal order, accepts with tears this civic crown. I stil^l recall all the emotion and all the joy of this festival. There was enthusiasm! there was patriotism! The entire city, from the *Hotel de Ville* to the humble window of the workman, was illuminated in the evening." They danced and fraternized as under the revolution; for Saint-Quentin is a sister of Paris, who has no need to receive the revolutionary word of command.

When La Tour found himself alone with his aged brother, he asked him where his father's violin was. The brother burst out laughing—a stout provincial who had never taken a violin seriously. However, at the entreaty of La Tour, he went and drew it from an old oaken press, where it was, as it were, buried, with a single string and a broken bow.

La Tour took the relic religiously, kneeled, and pressed it to his heart. "Ah! my brother, be assured, if I was homesick, it was somewhat on account of this violin. When I was twenty—"

He returned to his youth with rapture, like a traveller longing for the shade, who passes by a verdant wood.

He lived some seasons more at Saint-Quentin. He died there on the eve of the revolution, aged eighty-four years. The canon Duplaquet wrote on his

tomb: "*A good citizen—a just and cultivated mind, an upright and generous heart,*" winding up with thirty-two lines in tombstone style, which was thirty-one lines too much. "*Here lies La Tour!*" not a word more, for this name recalls a man and an artist.

THE WHIMS OF THE MARCHIONESS.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

Hised for the first time at the Odeon, May 12, 1844.

CHARACTERS.

THE MARQUIS DE VERMAND.
THE CHEVALIER DE VERSAC.
NICHOLAS, the Village Fiddler.
THE MARCHIONESS.
MARIANNE.

1783.

The scene is laid at the château de Vermand, in Normandy.—The stage presents a park.—On the right a summer-house, on the left a wall, partly concealed by shrubbery.

SCENE I.

(As the curtain rises, the sound of a bag-pipe is heard.—After having played, Nicholas enters from a thicket at a stealthy pace, in a very picturesquely-arranged dress.)

NICHOLAS. How is this! my music does not attract her here?—So this is the castle of *Beauty and the Beast*.—I don't wish to mention any names. What a mysterious château! Marianne has become invisible in it. It was worth the trouble truly, of

spoiling a fine hedge and my velvet breeches! I have lost my time since morning, moaning with my bag-pipes. I presented myself more than twenty times at the door, but it seems that here it is not the custom to pass by that way. I met a puppy of a valet-de-chambre, who said to me: "Stop there, Nicholas!" If I knew which was Marianne's window! They say that there is a short cut *the c.*—I wrote to her; did she read my letter? Who knows but that she has forgotten me? She has become a sort of grand lady at the château. Oh, no! no! Nicholas is not so soon forgotten. If I could only clasp her waist, and have a talk between four lips! But who is coming down there? Phew! it's the marchioness. These poor bushes! my poor velvet breeches! (*He takes to flight and clammers over the walls of the park.*)

SCENE II.

(Enter the marchioness de Vermand, with a fan in her hand. She is dressed in a hoop-petticoat, and all the extravagance of the period.)

MARCHIONESS. Yes, whims. Like and not like.—Not wish what one knows, and not know what one wishes. That is what they call caprice. There are people whom we support only, to make them support our caprices. Oh, good heavens! if we folks, whom nobody contradicts, could not contradict ourselves a

little how stupid it would be! My whim is the rose which I pull to pieces, the lover whom I will not accept, the play which is presented me, the one which I make, the one I would like to make, a rival, perhaps even a husband; for my part, when my own is not at hand — (*She walks up and down abstractedly.*) But, since I have returned to the château, all kinds of whims are forbidden to me. I must content myself with being happy. (*After a sigh, and in a languid tone:*) That is very amusing! I am tired of happiness; it seems to me as if I were eating milk-soup all the time. Destiny is obstinately bent on weaving my days of silk. If the thread were moistened with some tears, it would be well! — Will not the chevalier be here before eight o'clock? Ah! monsieur de Versac! you neglect me — for it is already half-past seven. For a month that he has been staying with us, we see nothing of him. What are we to do this evening? We are not at Paris! Marianne does not come. If I had that little romance, *No To-morrow!* The title is delicious. I would make the chevalier read it, to see whether he had days without to-morrows. Alas! reduced to read romances, when all the world about me is making them! Ah! grandmother had much more sense! But the abbés and the *mousquetaires* are disappearing: adieu to the little romances. Of what use are screens now-a-days? and oratories? unless to pray in. Where do I stand with the chevalier? An innocent

affection which will do no great damage to the heart, an eclogue, a pastoral, a real page out of Watteau. But if the chevalier was always there!—But the ingrate goes off elsewhere.

SCENE III.

THE MARCHIONESS AND MARIANNE.

THE MARCHIONESS. Thank Heaven! here you are at last! Well, that romance?—Make haste.

MARIANNE (*indolently*). Monsieur the chevalier has told me that a pretty girl does not lose by waiting; so I waited, madame.

THE MARCHIONESS (*snatching the book with impatience*). Yes, truly, she has wit. Most decidedly, Marianne, you are not like an ordinary person, you have the look of one of Marivaux's *soubrettes*.

MARIANNE. A *soubrette*! But madame the marchioness told my godmother I should be something better than that.

THE MARCHIONESS (*opening the volume*). How is this! I asked for *No To-morrow*, and here is the *Sorrows of the Heart*. I have enough of that myself. (*Throwing down the volume.*) That will do for the waiting-room. I am going to the fishpond; send the visitors to me—even my husband. (*Aside.*) There are days when the mind and heart have so little to do!

SCENE IV,

MARIANNE (*alone*). That will do for the waiting-room! but I do not belong to the waiting-room for my part. (*Picking up the book.*) These princesses are so insolent! all that they disdain, is good for us; so, that to hear them talk, if we have virtue, it is just because they do not want it themselves. (*She reads.*) "I have been to Lucinda, she is with the count de Trois-Etoiles; she looked as charming as possible, and I have fallen desperately in love with her." Well! these lovers do not stand still. Nicholas himself did not move so rapidly; But I have much need to read that! (*Throwing down the book in the style of the marchioness.*) It will do for the waiting-room. (*She draws from her bosom a letter of Nicholas and reads:*)

"Mamselle Marianne:—

"It is all settled, I am to marry you; the sooner the better. My father has handed me over his fiddle, and his bag-pipes; but before contributing to the amusement of others, I should like to contribute to yours and mine. With the mere thought of it, my heart is fiddling. I offer you a lot which is happy enough: Nicholas and all his music! We have had good fortune, and there is no time to lose. I must speak to you this evening close by, so expect to see me come in by the window or the chimney; all roads lead to Rome. A lover with a good will,

VOL. I.—15

always finds a road, and I am a resolute man for my part. War is war, love is love! I shall not be such a fool as to try the door, for all those dogs of valets who surround you, say to me: 'Stop there, Nicholas, you can't pass!'—I, I always pass; remember that Marianne. Signed NICHOLAS."

(*Resuming in a thoughtful tone.*) Yes, I do remember. Ah! Monsieur Nicholas, you want to marry me: I ask nothing better; for I am beginning to be heartily weary of the château. It is a real epidemic; by wearying herself, madame the marchioness, wearies others. A joint stool is better than a sofa; milking a cow does not spoil one's hands: at Trianon they do nothing else.

SCENE V.

MARIANNE, NICHOLAS (*on the wall*).

(*An air on the bag-pipe is heard.*)

MARIANNE. It is he in truth, it is he whom I love, that brave Nicholas. That air goes direct to my heart. Madame has gone, and there is monsieur coming. These fashionable couples look as if they were all the time playing puss in a corner. If Nicholas could only be of the party.

NICHOLAS. Here I am; stretch out your arms, I have something to tell you.

MARIANNE. Can you not talk from the top of the wall?

NICHOLAS. No, for lovers, speeches are made with the eyes.

MARIANNE. Are you near-sighted?

NICHOLAS. Yes.

MARIANNE. So much the better, in housekeeping, short sight is the best. Be off.

NICHOLAS. I will come back.

MARIANNE. Yes, after dark.

NICHOLAS. Send me a kiss, Marianne; pray send me a kiss! Ah, it runs like fire.

SCENE VI.

MARIANNE, M. DE VERMAND, NICHOLAS (*on the wall*).

THE MARQUIS (*entering*). Ah! how Normandy abounds in pretty girls! Find me a marchioness worth such a one as that. She is very pretty, most decidedly. (*He seizes Marianne's arm.*)

MARIANNE. Ah! you frightened me, monsieur.

THE MARQUIS. I faith I was very far from intending to make you afraid. When a person sees or hears you, he only thinks of making—love to you.

MARIANNE (*with dignity*). You sing every day the same song to me; but as they say, it is nothing but singing. Madame is in the park, monsieur.

THE MARQUIS. I understand very well; you want to send me to walk with her.

MARIANNE. Madame said that she would be there even for you.

THE MARQUIS. See how badly formed this age is : marriage is no longer anything but a jest ; one has a wife for love—of Heaven. One must resign himself to acting like everybody else. (*Rousing himself a little.*) What a pretty girl you are, Marianne ! What matter if my wife is at the end of the park, when you are here ! Ah ! Marianne, what a roguish look, what eyes ! one might call them the doors of hell. Your mouth is a rose-bush ; who are all those roses for, you little rogue ? (*He attempts to embrace Marianne's neck, she turns aside quickly.*) Ah I have at last turned your head, a woman's head is made to be turned.

MARIANNE. But, monsieur, it is rather yours that is turned.

THE MARQUIS. I shall lose it at the very least. What a rebellious mouth ! and what a pretty necklace of pearls in that mouth ! If you want a necklace, you have only to say the word. (*Aside.*) That is taking a good turn, as in *La Folle Journée*. But I, for my part, will not be served like Count Almaviva. (*He again seizes Marianne's arm.*)

MARIANNE. Have done ! You are going too far, monsieur. If it was madame, all very well, she could answer you ; but for my part, I do not know what to tell you, except that you are rumpling my dress for nothing.

THE MARQUIS (*aside*). Hum ! since we have exiled virtue, she has taken flight to the kitchen.

There is nothing to be gained any longer by descending. After all, my wife is prettier than that girl. (*Aloud.*) So, so, Marianne, you stand on your virtue: light dresses are in season.

MARIANNE. It is all I have, monsieur, and I hold on to it. It is little, but it is well put on. (*She perceives Nicholas, who raises his head above the wall. She utters a cry.*) Ah!

THE MARQUIS. What's the matter, Marianne?

MARIANNE. It was that stupid fellow who scared me.

(A valet-de-chambre enters and presents the *Mercur de France* to the marquis.)

THE MARQUIS (*opening the journal.*) Ah! here is a charade! Zounds, that is something serious! I must go and study this, for they will be talking about it to-morrow at the château. I will go to my study. (*He withdraws gravely.*)

SCENE VII.

MARIANNE, THE MARCHIONESS.

THE MARCHIONESS (*re-entering by another path.*) Well, Marianne, so nobody came?

MARIANNE. To amuse you, madame, I almost wanted to send monsieur the marquis to you.

THE MARCHIONESS. What are you saying, Marianne? It is plain that you are easily amused.

MARIANNE (*pettishly playing with her apron.*)

Monsieur the marquis preferred to keep me company ; I have the vapors still.

THE MARCHIONESS. Vapors ! Here are fine airs !

MARIANNE. It is not with me, madame, that you should be angry.

THE MARCHIONESS. Oh ! don't justify yourself, I am not jealous of anybody, and you understand very well —

MARIANNE (*aside*). I do not understand at all.

THE MARCHIONESS. Monsieur de Vermand simply wished to see the depths of your heart.

MARIANNE. But monsieur the marquis saw nothing there, I fancy.

THE MARCHIONESS (*aside*). Can it be possible ? I want to have the last word. Besides, this is a resource against ennui, for this is the beginning of a comedy. Am I going to find a pretext for my whims ? (*Aloud.*) Listen, Marianne, I will permit you to laugh a little with monsieur de Vermand, it will amuse me.

MARIANNE. But, madame, do you know whether I will permit myself to do so ? (*Aside.*) And Nicholas !

THE MARCHIONESS. Come, don't let us have so many airs. A great matter, truly, to smile at pretty speeches ! Do not be uneasy, your virtue will not be in danger.

MARIANNE. Madame speaks of it very leisurely.

THE MARCHIONESS. Don't argue, but do as I tell

you. Monsieur de Vermand will soon pass by this arbor ; be as coquettish as possible, and try all your charms upon him.

MARIANNE (*with simplicity and cunning*). But, madame, I am not learned in such matters. (*Aside.*) And frankly (*turning toward the audience*), between ourselves, I have no need to be.

THE MARCHIONESS. The fool ! Does not every one know such things without learning them ?—at least it appears to me—We let ourselves alone, and we go of our own accord.

MARIANNE. But how shall I make up with monsieur the marquis ? I am very sure that he is out of humor with me.

THE MARCHIONESS. Come, I will give you a lesson. Monsieur de Vermand passes close by you, you look at him out of the corner of your eye ; if he goes on, you will stop him by your voice.

MARIANNE. But what shall I say to him ? for one can not speak without saying something.

THE MARCHIONESS. Child ! On the contrary we talk all the time without saying anything. Woman's great wit is shown in saying so many things without speaking.

MARIANNE. Ah ! then speech goes for nothing ?

THE MARCHIONESS. If monsieur de Vermand does not stop, you will address him in a troubled voice, without knowing what you are saying.

MARIANNE. Just so. I will say to him : “ Mon-

sieur the marquis, how did we stand a little while ago? You kept saying to me, that my mouth was a rose-bush; you asked me who all these roses were for. Something was also said about a necklace."

THE MARCHIONESS. What Marianne? monsieur de Vermand said this to you! It is impossible. See what fools these men are! Gentil-Bernard could not have spoken better: "Your mouth is a rose-bush." Oh! it is divine. Monsieur de Vermand never had the wit to say as much to me. But I think he is coming. (*Edging up to Marianne.*) It is all arranged, you know your part very well. (*Aside.*) Ah! monsieur de Vermand! so her mouth is a rose-bush. Take care, there will be thorns there for you. (*Aloud.*) Play your part well, Marianne. Don't go too far, you know—only up to a certain point.

MARIANNE. I don't know anything at all about it, madame. Up to what point?

THE MARCHIONESS. Grant him an interview, nothing more. Besides I shall be there in the pavilion. I am not jealous at all: only curious. (*She enters the pavilion and draws to the door.*)

MARIANNE. A fine subject for curiosity!

SCENE VIII.

(Marianne sings. The Marquis passes close to her without listening to the song.)

THE MARQUIS. I shall shine to-morrow, for I have got hold of the charade. Two hours' study more and —

MARIANNE (*after having in vain played off her glances, aside*). Come I must engage him in conversation. (*Aloud*.) You have a great deal of wit, monsieur; I am sorry for it.

THE MARQUIS. What do you say, Marianne?

MARIANNE (*with a charming smile*). I say, monsieur, that it is well not to have much to do with wit, for wit is destructive to feeling. You are going to say that my wit will never destroy my feelings. It is all the same to me; when one has a heart, one laughs at all else.

THE MARQUIS. Where did you get that philosophic prattle from?

MARIANNE. I have been to a good school. By the by, monsieur, we did not get through with our affair a little while ago. We were —

THE MARQUIS (*aside*). Eh! It appears that one can get along rapidly with her. Jean-Jacques says that we must attack women in front; Voltaire says on one side—for my part, I say by turning one's back to them. (*He pretends to be going away*.)

MARIANNE. Have I in my turn scared you, monsieur?

THE MARQUIS (*returning*). It is your virtue which scares me. I am like the children, I am afraid of shadows. Ah, come, I love you to madness, what do you say to that?

MARIANNE (*starting back*). Have done, monsieur.

THE MARQUIS (*who has not touched her*). I am going to begin. (*He takes her hand.*) What a pretty little duchess you would make. Who ever saw such a roguish mouth. Love is lodged in it.

MARIANNE. What stuff! I don't understand any of it. We get along much better than that in our village. (*Aside.*) When Nicholas wants a kiss, he takes it, reserving to himself the privilege of asking me—for another. Poor Nicholas!

THE MARQUIS. What are you mumbling there?

MARIANNE. I was saying, monsieur, that I did not understand you, and that you made me lose my labor.

THE MARQUIS. You make me lose my time. Listen, Marianne. I love you to madness—but the marchioness might interrupt us.

MARIANNE. Make yourself easy, monsieur, madame is away by the hedge.

THE MARQUIS. Ah you rogue, if I had you there!

MARIANNE. What good would that do? No good I fancy. What would you tell me there? The answer to your charade.

(Night is coming on.)

THE MARQUIS. Yes, just so ; there is an enigma to make out ; I have a thousand charming things to tell you. See night is coming on ; the marchioness will go into the pavilion, to play on the harpsichord with the chevalier. Go down by the hedge, I will follow you soon, and we will not stay long ; besides, an enigma is soon explained.

MARIANNE. And you think then, monsieur, that I will go to the rendezvous ?

THE MARQUIS. I am sure you will. No one who is so pretty, is cruel.

MARIANNE. Don't trust to that, sir.

THE MARQUIS. In a quarter of an hour. It seems to me, as if I see you there already. (*He attempts to embrace her, she slips out of his arms.*) This is a lucky day : I have found an adventure, and I will find the answer to a charade. I think I will go to my library. It seems to me that I saw a book there the other day, called *The Key to Enigmas, Charades, and Riddles!*

MARIANNE (*left alone*). What am I to gain from all this ? Provided that Nicholas holds on well, I will take care of the rest.

SCENE IX.

MARIANNE, THE MARCHIONESS.

THE MARCHIONESS (*coming out of the pavilion*). So, so, *wait for me this evening, under the great chestnut-trees*. Is it a dream? Am I at the play? Truly these husbands have bad taste. I could weep with rage. Ah! women are right when they listen to their hearts! If the chevalier was here! Patience! —he will come.—Marianne give me your cap and your neckerchief at once.

MARIANNE. So I am already at the end of my part. (*Slyly*.) If you still wish, madame, I will go myself to the first rendezvous.

THE MARCHIONESS (*taking Marianne's cap*). You don't know what you are talking about. Make haste and arrange my hair, like yours. That's it, Marianne. There are moments when one is tempted —quicker, Marianne. Ah! the president's wife had good reason to speak ill of men; alas! she spoke ill of women, too. Marianne, you will go into the pavilion and play away on the harpsicord. You will remain there without a light. In a word, arrange it so that monsieur de Vermand will imagine that it is I.

MARIANNE. But, if monsieur the chevalier de Versac comes?

THE MARCHIONESS. Tell him it is not I.

MARIANNE (*slyly*). Why so, madame?

THE MARCHIONESS (*embarrassed*). Because — be-

cause it is not right to deceive any one. (*She puts on Marianne's neckerchief.*) I am going to learn fine things down there by the hedge. Will the night be dark? If he should recognise me—so much the worse for both.

MARIANNE. Under the hedge there is no occasion for recognition.

THE MARCHIONESS. Good, I begin to get into shape. This is really a pretty chapter of romance. It is a little too much like the *Marriage of Figaro*; but patience, the denouement. . . . It is growing darker, how I tremble! My heart beats at a pretty rate. Do I look as if I was yourself, Marianne? I have no time to go and look at myself.

MARIANNE. Completely, madame; so much so that I should be deceived myself. It seems to me as if I were looking in the glass. (*Roguishly.*) It is surprising how a small cap becomes you. But I am troubled, for my part. Monsieur the marquis will not like my having deceived him, or rather his not having deceived me.

THE MARCHIONESS. Don't be afraid, he wanted a kiss; he will bite his lips. That's all.

MARIANNE. As madame pleases.

THE MARCHIONESS. Is the marquis already at the hedge?

MARIANNE. He is up there in the library, with a book in his hand.

THE MARCHIONESS. Then I will go forthwith to

the rendezvous. I should prefer waiting for him. Do you make haste to make a noise on the harpsichord. (*She withdraws on tiptoe.*)

MARIANNE. A pleasant journey to you, madame. (*Alone.*) Ah well, I make a very good marchioness. They say that it is the dress which makes the monk; for my part, I say it is the monk which makes the dress.

SCENE X.

MARIANNE, THE CHEVALIER DE VERSAC.

THE CHEVALIER (*advancing slowly*). Good day, lovely Marianne. How do you happen to have such a bewildered look?

MARIANNE. A secret! silence! I will tell you nothing—ask me nothing.

THE CHEVALIER. A secret in a pretty mouth like yours is a secret no longer. Look you, Marianne—there is but one thing that can be trusted to a woman without danger, and that is, to tell her that she is pretty.

MARIANNE. A fine secret, truly! Everybody knows it.

THE CHEVALIER. Ah well! yes, we may tell a woman what everybody knows. So, what is your secret?

MARIANNE. I shall take care not to tell you.

THE CHEVALIER (*in a cautious tone*). I shall take care not to insist.

MARIANNE. Only think—what was I going to do?

THE CHEVALIER. Oh, don't say anything?

MARIANNE. Only think, that the new piece—I don't know what

THE CHEVALIER. The Marriage of Figaro?

MARIANNE. That is it; that play has turned madame the marchioness's head. We play it this evening.

THE CHEVALIER. I do not understand.

MARIANNE. It is simple enough. Monsieur the marquis made an appointment with me by the hedge. You know that he is very much taken with the Norman girls. Madame the marchioness has taken part of my dress and gone in my place. That is why I am so poorly equipped.

THE CHEVALIER. And the marquis?

MARIANNE. He is going to join madame directly, fancying that he will find me. Who will be finely caught, I ask you?

THE CHEVALIER. What impertinence! But I am not deceived: there is Vermand coming. (*He strikes his forehead.*) Adieu! I will hide myself under these trees; do not say that you have seen me, Marianne.

MARIANNE. You know how discreet I am. (*She enters the pavilion.*)

SCENE XI.

THE MARQUIS (*alone*).

THE MARQUIS. It is singular (*shaking the dust out of an old book*); I thought I took the *Key of Enigmas*, and here I have got the *Key of Dreams*. I would rather dream wide awake with Marianne. But is it all in good faith? She is making game of me, perhaps. These women are strange creatures when the devil gets hold of them, and he is always meddling among them. Oh, age of perversity and inconstancy! I have a great mind to keep out of the way. Such are men, when they are on the point of attaining their object, they almost always stop short. Bah! fire burns in all winds; the weathercock turns to the four cardinal points; and what is the heart but a weathercock on fire? (*He perceives the chevalier coming toward him.*)

SCENE XII.

THE MARQUIS, THE CHEVALIER.

THE MARQUIS (*aside*). He has chosen his time opportunely! Love is strewn thick with obstacles. I will go down to the hedge; he can chat at his ease with the marchioness. (*He is about to depart.*)

THE CHEVALIER. Marquis, I salute you.

THE MARQUIS. My dear friend, the marchioness is in there singing, I believe. Go and sing with her.

As regards myself, an affair of the gravest importance —

THE CHEVALIER. But, first of all, give me a moment. (*Aside.*) He wants to go there, but I do not want him to. Does he fancy that he is the husband of his wife? (*Aloud.*) A most unheard-of discovery! (*Aside.*) What shall I tell him?

THE MARQUIS. You can tell me that by and-by.

THE CHEVALIER. Right away. It is something marvellous. A charade which I have found in the *Mercure*.

THE MARQUIS. Well! do you know the answer.

THE CHEVALIER. Suppose we search for it together

THE MARQUIS (*making off*). I will go seek for it elsewhere.

THE CHEVALIER (*holding him back*). At least tell me what devil carries you off in this style?

THE MARQUIS. It is the devil of love, my dear fellow. But pray do not detain me any longer.

THE CHEVALIER (*feigning surprise and indignation*). How! you whom I thought so worthy of your wife, my poor friend? what a mournful aberration! You don't know whither you are going, unfortunate man!

THE MARQUIS. Ah ha! whence have you come yourself? My dear fellow, the philosophers will be your ruin, if they have not been so already. It is very fine for you to play the philosopher, O Socrates

of the bedchamber, tricked out in all the gewgaws of frivolity!

THE CHEVALIER. A wife so beautiful and so worthy of better homage. To wander out of one's road in gayety of heart, when one has such a travelling companion! It was well enough twenty years ago, when the angels of the chapels were merely superannuated Cupids. Now-a-days we must leave to the vulgar the last echoes of the regency. Dubarry wears haircloth.

THE MARQUIS. I am struck with amazement. Do you till your land like Helvetius and the duke of Choiseul? Does success no longer attend you, O philosopher of the side scenes? Is there a love-fast and vigil to day? Are you going to marry? Are you at work on the Encyclopedia?

THE CHEVALIER. All this is ill timed; I wish to prevent you

THE MARQUIS. And I am innocent enough to stop for your trifling talk.

THE CHEVALIER (*still holding on to him*). Once for all, you shall not proceed further in your wicked action. If you persist, I will call madame de Vermand.

THE MARQUIS. How violent he is! The poor girl will catch cold down there.

THE CHEVALIER. No matter for that, I shall go and tell her. Where is she? I understand such matters. The name is nothing—Vermand or Ver-

sac, it is no matter at the present time which of the two. But what sort of virtue has the lady?

THE MARQUIS. All virtues are equal in the night-time.

THE CHEVALIER. In what chapter are you with her?

THE MARQUIS. In the first; but the romance does not promise to be a long one. (*Aside.*) My wife is somewhat taken with him. What a good trick it would be to send him down there! What confusion that would get the cards in!

THE CHEVALIER. Do you want smelling-salts? will there be any fainting? Where is the rendez-vous? at a window? Must you take a ladder?

THE MARQUIS (*talking to himself*). The mist disappears; yes, reason returns to me. Why should we copy our predecessors? It is your affair—you who have no chains and nothing to risk. Well, then, go down to the end of the park, and call gently Marianne, for it is she. *A* pretty girl! I am a fool. You will preach her a sermon. In fine, my dear fellow, act as for me.

THE CHEVALIER. I will act as for myself. She is the Norman girl whom everybody thinks so pretty! I was very confident that your piece of good luck was a princess in a little cap. What matters it? Beauty is not plebeian, especially since madame de Pompadour has founded the dynasty of the petticoats.

THE MARQUIS. Hold! I should decidedly prefer to conduct my own affairs myself.

THE CHEVALIER (*darting toward the hedge*). I am your attorney. (*A struggle between the marquis and the chevalier, in which the latter gains the advantage. It grows darker.*)

SCENE XIII.

THE MARQUIS, *afterward* MARIANNE. In truth I am shockingly stupid. Come, come, my heart, be calm; your time is past, marriage has breathed over you. The prettiest girl in the world! Ah, if I had only snatched a profane kiss alongside of her little golden cross!—Don't let us say anything more about it, I am a fool. But of what use is wit now-a-days? Men no longer speak, they think! I have come fifty years too late; this age becomes old and reasoning; there is no use of powdaring, it still shows its white hairs. But, from what I hear, the marchioness is playing on the harpsichord in defiance of all ears. (*He goes to the pavilion.*) Zulmé, who is this devil's music for?

MARIANNE (*counterfeiting the voice of the marchioness*). For you, monsieur.

THE MARQUIS (*aside*). By-the-by, I must send her down by the hedge. That will be sport. She will see her chevalier, her dear chevalier there, playing the butterfly around Marianne. All this turns out marvellously for me. (*He calls.*) Zulmé! Zulmé, go down to the edge of the fishpond; some one is waiting for you under the hedge.

MARIANNE (*somewhat indignant, aside*). I don't understand it at all. So, this is the way he keeps the appointment I granted him.

THE MARQUIS. Marchioness, do you know where the chevalier is?

MARIANNE (*slipping aside in the dark*). He will not come this evening.

THE MARQUIS. Where are you flying to, my turtle-dove? (*He pursues Marianne without catching her.*)

MARIANNE (*aside*). All this turns out so well, that here I am, caught at the rendezvous. Poor Nicolas!

THE MARQUIS. It is astonishing how I love you to-night, marchioness!

MARIANNE. I am sorry for it; since you have waited until to-night, you can well wait until to-morrow.

THE MARQUIS. I never loved you so much, my dove. But you are taking flight. (*Marianne enters the pavilion; the marquis fancies that he is pursuing her through the park.*)

SCENE XIV.

NICOLAS (*appears straddling on the wall*). The devil! A man is not at ease on horseback on this wall, without any stirrups except trellis-slats, which will bear no weight.—I thought I heard Marianne's voice. If she would only come on this side, we should have fine times. Only see what love is capable

of!—And what is love? A thread, of which Heaven holds one end, and gives us the other to twist over. I said Heaven, but it is the devil.—And women!—Who will tell me what a woman is? A bush of thorns which entices us by its flowers, and the more one plucks, the more one is pricked. (*Feeling a thorn.*) Ah! are there women, then, at my feet? I certainly hear a noise. (*He listens.*) They are speaking softly.

SCENE XV.

THE CHEVALIER *and the* MARCHIONESS *enter*; NICOLAS *on the wall.*

THE CHEVALIER. Fair Marianne.

NICOLAS (*wriggling about on the wall*). What's that? It is about Marianne!—Am I deceived?—If I am deceived, I will not be beaten. Let us see. (*He listens.*)

THE MARCHIONESS (*imitating Marianne*). This is very ill, monsieur the marquis.—(*Aside.*) It is certainly the chevalier; there is no use of his counterfeiting the manner and voice of my husband. What strange comedy is going on? I must play my part well.

THE CHEVALIER. I swear to you—(*Aside.*) If I recognise her I am a fool; since she wishes to pass for Marianne, let us take her for Marianne. (*Aloud.*) In fine, my pretty Norman, let us return to our start.

ing-point. Since you have made an appointment with me at the hedge, it is not right to repulse me. Where do you get this savage virtue? it is only fit for fools (*he tries to seize her, she escapes*) and for great ladies who think that they owe it to their ancestors; but between us philosophers who have no longer any prejudices, and ladies' maids who never had any, virtue is an ill-cut garment which injures the shape. (*He catches hold of the marchioness.*)

NICOLAS. Well! is he going to lay hands upon that garment?

THE MARCHIONESS. How have you the heart, monsieur, to leave madame the marchioness for me?

THE CHEVALIER. She is my wife, Marianne; what would you have me say to my wife?

THE MARCHIONESS. And what if she were not your wife?

THE CHEVALIER. That is not the present question. She is handsome, but you are a thousand times still more beautiful.

THE MARCHIONESS. The insolent fellow! (*She gives the chevalier a good slap.*)

THE CHEVALIER (*aside*). The dence! That was the slap of a woman of thirty.—(*Aloud.*) That was a shot; but in love as in war. Ah! but why this violent caress? What have I done, or what have I not done?

THE MARCHIONESS (*aside*). It is because I am jealous of myself.

NICOLAS. I am here at the play: I see very well that I shall be obliged to take a part.

THE CHEVALIER. Listen, lovely Marianne: a kiss, one single kiss. I don't count that which I stole; it is only Normans like you who count. Shall I not? A kiss taken and given, that is all I ask of your savage virtue.

THE MARCHIONESS. A kiss taken and given! It seems that you are learned in these matters.—*(Aside.)* A kiss? in reality, it is the only pledge which I desire of the affection I entertain for him. A single one; let us go no farther! But why not grant him that?

THE CHEVALIER. What the mischief are you dreaming about?

THE MARCHIONESS. I am consulting my heart.

THE CHEVALIER. Well, what does your heart say about it? Take care! it is a Norman.

NICOLAS. That is just what I was going to say.

THE MARCHIONESS. Well, monsieur, if I can trust my heart, I will let you take a kiss, and I will give you another, but on certain rigorous conditions.

THE CHEVALIER. Provided that there are two kisses, I swear.

THE MARCHIONESS. It is not worth the trouble. These are my conditions *(slowly and in a tremulous voice)*. You will take the first, thinking—mark it well! thinking—of madame the marchion-

ess. (*A pause.*) The other you will take thinking of whoever you please—of me, for example.

THE CHEVALIER. With all my heart! (*Saying this, he leans toward the marchioness and tenderly embraces her.*) That is what I call plucking a rose.

THE MARCHIONESS. That poor madame the marchioness!

NICOLAS. This is passing the limits; but I will wait a second. (*He descends to the park and approaches slowly.*)

THE MARCHIONESS. Did you really think of madame the marchioness?

THE CHEVALIER. As much as if I had embraced her herself.

THE MARCHIONESS (*aside*). After all, of what use are the chevalier's lips, when I have, day and night, those of the marquis? Love is always love: what matter who is the lover? How happy I am not to have disclosed this episode of my life! There is one thing that is better than Master Cupid with his superannuated arrows; and that is my son asleep in his cradle.

THE CHEVALIER (*aside*). After all, why should I seek adventures in that quarter? Is not my own mistress worth more than another man's wife? Vanity of vanities, all is but vanity in love! A great prize, truly, to count one woman the more!—the wife of another, who will be no longer his, and will

VOL. I.—16

not be mine! By-the-by, I have the right to begin again. And this time, as it is Marianne whom I embrace, it must be in my arms.

THE MARCHIONESS. Come, let all be said and done! (*The chevalier opens his arms to clasp the marchioness; but, at that moment, Nicolas rushes up and seizes madame de Vermand, who gives a shriek.*)

NICOLAS. Ah, you rogue you! is that the way you keep appointments!—Well, I love you, I pardon you, and I will carry you off. (*He gives the marchioness a vigorous hug.*) Now for you. (*He threatens the chevalier, at the same time breaking off a stick. The chevalier and the marchioness withdraw on one side.*)

SCENE XVI.

ALL THE CHARACTERS.

(*The marquis enters surprised at hearing Nicolas's voice. The chevalier and the marchioness remain at a distance.*)

NICOLAS. Where the plague has he gone to? It was labor lost to get a stick.

THE MARQUIS. Who is this clown after.

NICOLAS. Good! I have found him again. (*He seizes the marquis, whom he takes for the chevalier, and beats him.*)

THE CHEVALIER. Capital! The marquis ought to be satisfied now.

MARIANNE (*running up with a candle at the cries of the marquis. She throws herself on Nicolas and disarms him.*) Nicolas, you don't know what you are . . . saying.

THE MARQUIS. A singular style of expressing one's self! You villain, I will have you hung!

NICOLAS. So there are two Mariannes here?

MARIANNE (*pointing to herself*). Here is the real one.

THE CHEVALIER (*in a pompous tone*). You see, marquis, under the control of healthy doctrines, in the presence of the grave duties which the social law imposes on you, it does not become the strong man, the philosopher, the sage, to suffer himself to be led away by his passions, and much less by his whims, for

THE MARQUIS. What rigmarole! I do not understand you, but you are right.—Whims? the marchioness has so many, that I thought she might pass over in me a little

NICOLAS. He is not dainty-mouthed!

THE MARCHIONESS. You see that your whims are still more dangerous to yourself than mine would be.

THE CHEVALIER (*to the marchioness*). And ours, marchioness?

THE MARCHIONESS. Ours, chevalier? Let us speak no more about it, for a whim which lasts is likely to become a passion. The great passions are rare.—I

do not believe in them—except ours, marquis, for you are corrected—are you not?—effectually.

THE MARQUIS. I have at least had a caution!

THE MARCHIONESS. The hero of the piece is Nicolas—I feel all rumped yet.

MARIANNE (*indignant*). All rumped!

THE MARCHIONESS. Nicolas, I wish to go to your wedding.

NICOLAS. Marianne says that she does not wish to marry.

THE MARCHIONESS. Don't believe a word of it. In love, when a woman says "*I do not wish to,*" she no longer knows what she says.

A ROMANCE ON
THE BANKS OF THE LIGNON.

I.

IN 1672, Madame Deshoulières, already surnamed the tenth Muse, quitted with her two daughters, *the flowery meads of the banks of the Seine*, to go, as she herself said, to rejoin Monsieur Deshoulières. Monsieur Deshoulières was in Guienne, superintending the fortifications under the orders of Louvois; Madame Deshoulières went to Dauphiné. Thus for three fine years they made a pleasant family. Madame Deshoulières was celebrated for her beauty as for her wit. With her thirty-eight years, she was through her grace and wit, yet young. She left upon her path Celadons without number; but fortunately for Monsieur Deshoulières, everything ended with sheep.

The mesdemoiselles Deshoulières, Madeleine and Bribri, were pretty girls from seventeen to eighteen years of age, cradled in the innocent sheepfolds of

their mother ; they believed in all the poetry with which bucolic rhymes adorned the country. They imagined they saw on their journey, shepherds crowned with roses, playing upon the bagpipe, and naiads and shepherdesses dancing upon the verdant shores. The whole three disembarked upon the shores of the Lignon, in April, at the château of Madame d'Urtis. The season though somewhat rainy, had superb mornings. Therefore our travellers rose early to trample the grass, yet tremulous with the steps of Astræa, that limpid stream, the mirror of the shepherdess, those thickets still resounding with the complaints of Celadon. During one of the first promenades, Madeleine Deshoulières, impatient to see one of the idyls versified by her mother, asked ingenuously if they would not meet a single shepherd on the banks of the Lignon. Madame Deshoulières had but a moment previous spied a peasant and a cow-girl, who were playing at the diverting game of *pied de bœuf* ; she endeavored to describe this pretty picture : therefore she replied to Madeleine in verse.

“They are perfectly right, in saying that the pictures of nature are more beautiful in the distance. Is it possible, to believe that that is a shepherdess, a shepherdess of Lignon ?”

The cow-girl, was simply a poor little peasant, badly combed, badly shaped, with marvellously spread hands, winking eyes, and endless mouth.

The shepherd was a fair match for the shepherdess ; there was, however, upon his round face, an indefinable expression of naiveté and happiness, the expansive stupidity so delightful to Parisian eyes. Madame Deshoulières, who always saw through the prism of Honoré D'Urfé, poetically continued her picture.

"The occupation you are engaged in, is very pretty, is it not, my child?" said Madeleine to the little peasant.

"Oh, no, my handsome young lady : I do not earn the water that I drink : and, moreover, in the evening, I have a good beating thrown into the bargain."

"And you?" resumed Madeleine turning to the shepherd who retreated blushing.

"As for me," said he, stammering a little, "it is quite another affair : I am boarded and lodged ; but I eat black bread, and my lodging is such as Providence provides."

"He is not so stupid," said Bribri. "Where are the sheep then?"

"There is no longer any flock," said the young herdsman.

"What!" said Madeleine, with vexation and chagrin, "I shall not see the pretty lambs bleating and bounding on the banks of the Lignon? O Celadon, what will thy shade say?"

In her capacity of bucolic poetess, Madame Deshoulières took good care not to look or listen. She

saw only the loves of Astræa, she heard only the songs of the old romance.

On their return to the château, Madeleine and Bribri complained, that they had seen neither flock nor shepherdess.

"Do you care for those things?" said Madame d'Urtis smiling.

"Much," said Bribri; "we hoped to live here the life of shepherdesses; I have brought a full rustic equipment."

"As for me," said Madeleine, "I have twenty ells of rose-colored riband, and twenty ells of blue riband to adorn my crook and my sheep."

"Well, my fair beauties, there are a dozen of sheep browsing at the end of the park; take them with full liberty to roam the fields; go and lead them under the alder-trees, in the large park."

Madeleine and Bribri leaped with joy, while their mother was painfully seeking for a rhyme, without thinking of the eclogue which was preparing. They hardly took time to breakfast. "They attired themselves in a coquettish dress," wrote Madame Deshoulières to Mascarón, "they cut themselves a crook in the park, and adorned it with ribands. Madeleine was for the blue riband, Bribri for the rose-colored. Oh! what pretty little shepherdesses! They spent more than an hour, in finding a name to suit them; at last, Madeleine was for Amaranthe, Bribri for Daphne. It is a new baptism, in which they dis

pensed with your assistance. I have just seen them through the trees, gliding lightly along the stream of love. Poor shepherdesses, take good care of the wolves."

Thus then, in the afternoon of the same day, Madeleine and Bribri, that is, Amaranthe and Daphne, in gray silk skirts, satin waists, their hair in ringlets, and a crook in their hands, were leading through the fields the twelve sheep of the château d'Urtis. The flock which was very hungry that day, was very capricious and very intractable. The two shepherdesses took all the pains in the world to keep them in the right road: it was a charming concert of shrill cries, clear bursts of laughter, bleatings and songs. Happy girls! they inhaled happiness from the soul of nature. They ran wildly along, they threw themselves upon the fragrant grass, they looked at themselves in the limpid waters of the Lignon, they gathered the primroses by the handful. The flock lost nothing by this; from time to time the cunningest sheep, seeing himself guarded by such frolicksome shepherdesses, willingly devoted himself to some corn in the neighborhood.

"That is yours," said Amaranthe.—"It is yours," said Daphne. They agreed to make a division, to adorn one set with blue collars, and the other with rose-colored collars. Every animal had his name: Melibœus, Jeannot, Robin, Blanchette, and so on.

At sunset, the shepherdesses brought back their little flock, passing by the stream on their way; Madame Deshoulières wept with joy.

"Ah! my dear girls," she said to them, as she kissed them upon the forehead, "it is you who have made an eclogue, and not I."

"In fact," said Madame d'Urtis, seating herself beneath the willows on the banks, "there is nothing wanting to the picture."

"There is a dog wanting," said Daphne.

"A wolf rather," murmured the fair Amaranthe blushing.

II.

Not far from the château d'Urtis, the old manor-house of Langevy raised its pointed turrets above the surrounding groves. There M. de Langevy, his old mother, and his young son, lived in great retirement from the world. M. de Langevy had struggled against all the storms, and all the disappointments of life, and he was reposing in the silence of solitude, regretting his wife and his youth, his good sword and his adventures. His son, Hector Henri de Langevy, had studied with the Jesuits of Lyons, until the age of eighteen; but accustomed to his grandmother's fondness, he had returned three or four years since, resolved to live with his family, careless of the warlike glories that had excited the ambition of his father. M. de Langevy, while he condemned this

mode of life, which he thought unsuited to youth, left Hector free ; he only obliged him to hunt, wishing, as he said, that his descendant should not lose all the prerogatives of war. Hunting afforded little amusement to Hector ; though it might have done so, if he could have hunted without that heavy gun of his grandfather's, which frightened him, but did not frighten the game. This formidable hunter, after walking about for six months, could not hear the sound of a partridge's wings without trembling. Do not suppose that Hector lost his time : he wandered in bright and smiling dreams, he already saw the dawn of love breaking in the horizon ! He was in the happy days of that golden age when the heart yet trembles only with hope, when the soul rather in delight than in intoxication, flits like the booty-seeking bee, from the flower to the star, from the shade to the sunshine, from the murmuring fountain to the cooing dove, from the warbling grove to the sighing woman ; but Hector still sought in vain the sighing woman, in the almost deserted walks of Le Forez. At the château de Langevy, there was only a house-keeper, past her prime, and a chubby-cheeked servant-girl, unworthy of a heart that expands upon the banks of the Lignon. He made great calculations upon a young Parisian cousin, who was to pass the gay season with his father. In the meantime, he walked about with his gun upon his shoulder, happy in his hopes, happy in the spring-time, happy on ac-

count of nothing, as the poor creatures of God are in some bright days of youth.

You guess what happened. One day that he was walking slowly along, according to his custom, lost in his imaginary world, he came near falling into the Lignon. As he always went straight forward, without regarding the hedges and the fences, he found himself upon the edge of the stream, with his foot raised, in the act of advancing. He remained thus in great confusion, with his mouth open, for some seconds. On the other side of the Lignon, in the fields belonging to the château d'Urtis, he had suddenly seen, as if by enchantment, our two charming shepherdesses, who were looking at him out of the corners of their eyes. He blushed up to his ears, while he asked himself, whether he ought to advance or retreat. To depart, would be awkward; yet he could not throw himself into the water, in order to save his honor; and besides, when on the other side, would he dare to approach the two shepherdesses? He probably adopted the wisest course: he seated himself among the reeds, laid down his gun, and looked at the sheep feeding. At twenty, love comes as swiftly as an arrow; Hector suddenly felt that he was desperately in love with one of the shepherdesses. He did not know which, but what did that matter?—he was in love. If he had been twenty years older, he would have adored them both at once; it would have been almost as wise.

Amaranthe and Daphne, however, had blushed in their turn; they hung their heads languishingly and said nothing further. At last, Amaranthe, the most frolicsome and lively, resumed her prattle and her gayety.

"Do you see, Bribri, or rather Daphne? it is a fabulous god; it is Narcissus looking at his image."

"Say rather that it is your image he is looking at," said Daphne still blushing.

"It is Pan sighing among the reeds, waiting for you to be metamorphosed into a flute, my poor Daphne."

"You are wrong, sister, it is Endymion pursuing the shepherdess Amaranthe."

"At the rate he goes, he will pursue her for a long time. If he were not so much of a rustic, he would be quite good-looking, with his long brown hair. Do you know that he has been there for nearly an hour; he will take root like the hama-dryads."

"Poor fellow!" murmured Daphne artlessly, "he seems to be quite lonely down there by himself."

"He will come to us—it is plain enough; we will give him a crook and a hat adorned with flowers."

"Very true, we need a shepherd," said Daphne, with a charming smile of innocence. "Oh, no!" she added instantly, "it is, in fact, quite fortunate there is a stream between us."

"I hope that he will at last find a bridge to *cross the stream of love*."

Now, at that moment, more than ever, Hector was thinking of *crossing the stream of love*; he inhaled, with a charm until then unknown, the intoxicating perfume of the violet and the primrose, the reeds and the wet grass. While he sought with his eyes for some means of crossing, he saw an old willow half overturned into the stream; with a little boldness and agility, it was a pleasant and poetical bridge. Hector was willing to make the attempt: he rose resolutely and went straight to the willow without faltering; but, when he reached it, he could not help thinking, that in that place and at that season, the stream was rather deep. At last he clambered up the trunk, reached the end of an inclining branch, and landed safely in the meadow of the château d'Urtis. He had but one road to follow, and that was to go straight to the shepherdesses. He advanced boldly, overcoming as he best could his childish timidity. He approached the first sheep of the flock with insidious caresses; after which, finding himself at a few steps from Amaranthe, he bowed with an uneasy smile.

"Mademoiselle"

He was suddenly interrupted by a soft, clear voice.

"There is no mademoiselle here; there is the shepherdess Daphne, and the shepherdess Amaranthe."

Hector, who had a compliment on his lips for the

beautiful young lady who kept the sheep, knew not what to say to the shepherdesses. He bowed a second time.

"Beautiful Amaranthe and beautiful Daphne, condescend to permit an humble mortal to tread the turf of your fields."

"That is not bad," murmured the satirical Amaranthe with a sarcastic smile.

Daphne, more charitable and more touched by the hunter's gallantry, replied to him, as she hung down her head: "Yes, sir, it is only for you to tread this grass as you pass"

"We will even do the honors of our house," continued Amaranthe; "we offer your lordship a seat on the grass."

"I am too happy to throw myself at your feet," exclaimed Hector, kneeling.

But he had chosen his place badly; he broke Daphne's crook beneath his knee.

"Good Heaven! my poor crook!" said she with a sigh.

"I am in despair," said Hector; "I will go and cut you another down there among the ash-trees; but this was probably dear to you, it came from a shepherd, perhaps—why did I say a shepherd?—a prince, rather, for you yourselves are princesses or fairies."

"We are simply shepherdesses," replied Amaranthe.

"You are simply beautiful ladies from Paris, taking the country air at the château d'Urtis. Heaven be praised! for, in my walks in the valley, I shall see you in the distance, if I dare not see you nearer; I shall see you appear through the trees like enchantresses."

"Yes, we are Parisians, but for ever retired from the world and its deceitful clamors."

Amaranthe pronounced these last words in a rather declamatory tone.

"You begin early," said Hector, smiling; "you have then good reason to complain of the world."

"That is our secret, monsieur hunter. But do you, too, live like a young hermit?"

"As for me, beautiful Amaranthe, I have always dreamed with delight of the life of the shepherds, but I confess that I had no faith in pretty shepherdesses. Since I have met you, I will plunge deeper into my joyful reveries. Ah! why can I not keep the sheep with you?"

The two young ladies did not at first know what to answer; the wolf was getting into the sheepfold rather fast. Daphne, at last, replied:—

"Our flock is very small, and it is very poorly guarded at that."

"What a happiness for me to become Daphnis, to sing to you a lay of love or a song of May, to gather bouquets and weave crowns for you!"

"Let us say no more about it," said Amaranthe

rendered somewhat uneasy by the sudden ardor of Daphnis; "the sun is setting, we will return to the park. Farewell, sir," she added, as she rose to depart.

"Farewell, Daphnis," murmured the tender Daphne, with emotion.

Hector dared not follow them; he remained for more than a quarter of an hour standing in the field, with his eye fixed first upon them, and then upon the gate of the park d'Urtis. His heart was beating violently, his whole soul was flying after the shepherdesses. "'Farewell, Daphnis,' Daphne said to me; I still hear that sweet farewell. How pretty she is! how pretty they are! Amaranthe has the most grace, but Daphne is the most touching. What beautiful eyes! what white hands! what a sweet smile! And that charming costume, so simple and coquettish! that white waist which I dared not look upon! that silk skirt which could not hide the tips of those pretty, delicate feet! It is Diana—it is Venus—it is an enchantment—I shall go mad. Ah! cousin, you should have come sooner!"

The sun had sunk to rest in a bed of purple clouds; the nightingale was pouring forth its pearly notes; the foliage of May was trembling in the breeze of spring that spread abroad the intoxicating perfume of the fields; the bee, as he returned to his hive, was humming joyfully; the grasshopper was dancing to the first night-songs of the cricket. At

the bottom of the valley, the young herdsman mingled his clear voice in the rural concert; the frogs sent forth their melancholy strains on the banks of the Lignon, which were sweetly telling, beneath the mysterious reeds, of the plaints of Celadon and sighs of Astræa. It was all songs, murmurs, perfumes, and amorous hymns. Hector had not room enough in his heart for all these joys of nature. "To-morrow," said he, as he kissed Daphne's broken crook, "to-morrow I will return."

III.

THE next day, Hector wandered in the morning along the banks of the Lignon, with a newly-cut crook in his hand. He looked every moment toward the gate of the park d'Urtis, hoping to see the graceful apparitions of the day before. At last, about noon, a lamb darted through the gate and bounded gayly over the field, and eleven other animals of the flock followed at the same pace, to the ringing laughter of Amaranthe. Daphne did not laugh. As she passed the gate, she cast a side glance toward the stream: "As I guessed," she murmured, "Daphnis has returned." Now Daphnis, unable to restrain his joy, was advancing to meet the two shepherdesses, when he was suddenly stopped on his way by Madame Deshoulières and Madame d'Urtis. When they returned home the day before,

Amaranthe had, to the great chagrin of Daphne, told how a young hunter had met them—not like a hunter asking his way, but like a hunter who makes his own way into the hearts of others. Madame d’Urtis had no doubt it was young De Langevy. As Amaranthe had added that she was quite sure, in spite of all that Daphne could say, that he would return the next day, every one wished to be of the party. Hector would have willingly retreated; two women might be all very well—but four! Nevertheless he stood his ground, he awaited them with firmness, and saluted the ladies like a resolute youth. They returned him three graceful salutations; Daphne alone passed on without bowing, which seemed to him to augur well. Not knowing very well how to commence the conversation, and as he was, besides, losing his self-possession, he ventured to offer his crook to Daphne. As she had no crook and no reason to refuse, she took it with a trembling hand, at the same time looking at Madame Deshoulières.

“I broke yours yesterday, charming Daphne; but it is not lost, however; I will make precious relics of it.”

“Monsieur de Langevy,” said Madame d’Urtis pleasantly, “since you are so kind as to guard the sheep with these young ladies, come with them in an hour, and take lunch at the château.”

“I will go whenever you wish,” said Hector precipitately.

"It is settled," replied Madame d'Urtis; "I will return at once, to have the butter churned and the cheese prepared; a very simple luncheon, but a luncheon of friends."

"In a word, a shepherdess's luncheon," said Madame Deshoulières.

Daphne had slowly wandered off, thoughtlessly, pressing the crook to her heart; she approached the bank, led on by some vague, mysterious sentiment, that longed for solitude. A young lamb, the prettiest and whitest of the flock, already accustomed to her gentle caresses, had followed her like a faithful dog, and she glided her hand over him, as she turned back toward her mother. She saw with some surprise, Madame Deshoulières and Hector talking together like old friends, while Madame d'Urtis and Amaranthe were chasing each other wildly toward the park. She sat down on the fresh grass of the bank, opposite the reeds where she had seen Hector the day before. As she saw she was quite alone, at least for a moment, she ventured to look at the crook. It was a branch of ash, of good size, adorned with a bouquet and a bunch of ribands, rather badly made. As Daphne was about to improve it, she saw with affright, a note hidden in the bouquet. What should she do with this note?—read it? But that was dangerous, her confessor did not order it, and her mother was at hand, who might surprise her. Not to read it, was a much simpler course; did she not almost

know what the note said? Besides, what good would it do to know? Not to read it, was then the wisest plan; you guess that she read it; you would have done as she did, madam. It was not a vulgar note in prose, as you may see:—

“TO THE SHEPHERDESS DAPHNE.

“The fairest day of all the May
Was yet the happiest I have known;
What hopes I cherished on that day—
The brightest of the month of May!
'Twas then you stole my heart away:
If you that heart will deign to own,
The fairest day of all the May
Will be the happiest I have known.

“*The Shepherd* DAPHNIS.”

Surely Daphne would not have pardoned Hector, if he had written in prose, but in verse—it was merely a poetical license. Far from tearing the note and throwing it away, she folded it up, and gently slipped it into her pretty white satin bosom, a woman's most charming rag-basket, as Boufflers used to say. For the first time in her life, she discovered an unspeakable charm in seeing the waves of the brook flow by, skimmed over by the skipping fly-catchers and the coquettish dragon-fly. But suddenly beholding the forms of Madame Deshoulières and Hector, she turned pale, like a culprit caught in the act.

“Well, my daughter, how thoughtful you sit there on the edge of the water, forgetful of you

wandering sheep ! Monsieur de Langevy, you who have given her a crook, lead her back to her sheep. As for me, I am going to write an epistle to my bishop."

Madame Deshoulières walked off a short distance repeating to herself in a low voice :—

"From famous Lignon's silver stream,
I know not what to write ;
The airs of this bright region seem
All fraught with wild delight,
Since the late shepherd Celadon
The fair Astræa loved,
And, all his soul by grief undone,
Along its borders roved."

Madame Deshoulières was not severe in regard to love, provided, however, that love had all the externals of gallantry and delicacy, as at the hôtel Rambouillet ; so she rhymed her epistle without disturbing herself about her daughter ; she only spoke a word from time to time, to remind her that she was present. Daphne, who scarcely answered a word to Hector, eagerly replied at length to her mother ; it is true, she knew not what she was saying.

The shepherdess Daphne, or rather Bribri Deshoulières, was, as has been seen, pretty, artless, and tender ; pretty, with a character of unspeakable gentleness in her features, artless as young girls are, that is to say, with some little diabolical malice ; tender with that sweet smile which opens the heart at the same time, as the lips. What was most striking

about her at the first glance, was a light veil of sadness, a fatal presentiment which rendered her still more touching. Her sister was prettier perhaps, she had more full-blown roses in her cheeks, more seductive grace, more amiable coquetry ; but if the eyes were for Amaranthe, the heart was for Daphne, and as the eyes become the slaves of the heart, Daphne triumphed. Thus Hector, in his amorous transport, had at first seen only Amaranthe, and yet when once at a distance from the two sisters, he chiefly thought of Daphne.

IV.

THE bell of the château announced the luncheon ; Hector offered his arm to Madame Leshoulières, Daphne called her sheep, and they returned through the park, where they met Madame d'Urtis and Amaranthe. The collation was to the taste of every one, both by its gayety and by its viands. First course : an omelet *au jambon* ; *entrée* : cakes and fresh butter ; second course : a magnificent cream cheese ; dessert : meringues and sweetmeats. I take all these details from the correspondence of Madame Deshoulières ; may those pardon me who have never lunched.

At night-fall, Hector quitted the company with many regrets, but he had no time to lose even in such good company ; he had two leagues to travel,

without moonlight and over cross-roads, still broken up by the heavy equinoctial rains.

The next day, Hector returned to the château d'Urtis, passing through the field on his way. When he was near the willow, which served as a bridge to the stream, he was astonished at seeing in the fields neither the shepherdesses nor the flock. He passed the bridge, thinking that it was a bad omen, but hardly had he reached the other bank, when he caught sight of some sheep scattered about at the end of the fields. He went rapidly toward them, rather uneasy, at seeing neither Amaranthe nor Daphne ; as he approached, he soon saw his beloved shepherdess, sadly bending over the Lignon, which in that place, fell noisily in little cascades. The tender Daphne had surrounded with her pretty arms the trunk of a young willow, which held her gracefully above the cascade, and sheltered her with its fragrant shade. She was abandoning her soul to those cloudy reveries, of which the thread, joined in a thousand places, is the work of joy that hopes, and sadness that fears. She did not see Hector approach ; at the sight of him, she was surprised as if she had started from a dream.

"Are you alone?" said Hector, coming up to her.

She hastened to reply, that her sister was coming to join her. The two lovers kept silence for some seconds, casting side-glances at each other, and not

daring to speak, as if they feared the sound of their own words in the solitude.

"It appears to me," said Hector trembling, "that there is some sad idea coursing through your mind."

"It is true," replied Daphne. "Mamma has received news of M. Deshoulières; he will pass through Avignon in a day or two, and we are going to depart, to meet him on his way."

"Depart!" exclaimed Hector turning pale.

"Yes; I who was so happy here in these fields, with these sheep that I love so much!"

As she spoke of the sheep, Daphne looked at Hector.

"What prevents your remaining? Madame Deshoulières will come for you by-and-by."

"By-and-by! my grief would be still greater. I wish to go or to remain always."

At these words, Hector threw himself upon his knees, seized Daphne's hands, kissed them passionately, and said to her, as he turned upon her his eyes moist with love: "Ah! yes, always, always! You know, Daphne, I love you, I wish to tell so all my life."

Daphne, yielding to her heart, allowed her hands to be kissed, without thinking of defending herself.

"Alas! I can not always keep the sheep. What will become of the poor shepherdess?"

"Am I not your shepherd? am I not Daphnis?"

VOL. I.—17

said Hector with greater ardor ; “ confide in me, in my heart, in my soul. This hand shall never quit yours ; we will live the same life, under the same sunshine, and the same cloud, in the desert or in a palace. But with you, will not the poorest hut be a palace ? Listen, my dear Daphne ; there is a cottage half a league from here, the Chaumière-des-Vignes, inhabited by the sister of my nurse, where we may live in all the charming mystery of love.”

“ Never ! never ! ” exclaimed Daphne.

She withdrew her hands from those of her lover, she retired some steps and began to weep. Hector, still upon his knees, drew himself toward the ash-trees where she had stopped ; he spoke of love with passion, he supplicated with tears ; he was so eloquent, that poor Daphne, too weak to resist long these emotions of a first love, at once diabolical and angelic, which have led astray and intoxicated us all, said to him, all pale and terrified :—

“ Yes, I confide in you and Heaven. Let what will happen ; but is it my fault if I love you ? ”

A tender embrace followed these words. Evening had come, and the sun, hidden behind the clouds of the horizon, gave but a pale light ; the young herdsman was driving home the cows and the turkeys whose gobble disturbed the harmony of the grove. The sheep of the château were gradually taking their way to the brook.

“ See,” said Daphne, as she parted her disordered

hair from her brow ; "see my poor sheep pointing out to me the road to follow."

"On the contrary," said Hector, "the ungrateful animals are departing peaceably without you."

"But I am afraid ! How can I deceive my mother ? she will die of grief."

"She will make verses and that will be the end of it."

"I will write to her, that not being able to resist my heart, I have departed without giving her notice, to the convent of St. Mary Magdalen, of which they were speaking yesterday."

Thus the fair and pure Daphne, so candid and so artless, found herself all at once ingenious in evil ; so true is it, that at the bottom of the most amiable heart, there is found a little grain of depravity.

"Yes, yes," replied Hector, "you will write to Madame Deshoulières, that you have taken refuge in the convent ; she will set out for Avignon, we will remain alone under this beautiful sky, and in this beautiful country, happy as the singing-bird, free as the wind of the mountain."

And, as he said this, Hector drew Daphne along. They had arrived at the end of the field, before a slight bridge of boards, covered with moss and floating grass. Daphne refused to cross ; she already had feelings of remorse, and a presentiment that, the bridge once crossed, it would be all over with her simplicity of heart. Nevertheless she crossed. But

let those women who have not crossed, cast the first stone at her.

After half an hour's walk, often interrupted by a glance or a kiss, they arrived at the Chaumière-des-Vignes. The good old woman was weeding out the peas in her garden; she had intrusted the care of her house to a large gray cat, who was asleep in the doorway. Daphne looked lovingly at this dwelling; it was an agreeable solitude, approached by a narrow path bordered by elders, and carpeted with fragrant grass. They passed through an enclosure, planted with some magnificent vines, twined about the trunk of the pear-tree, and the branches of the elm. The Lignon, by a graceful curve, flowed within two steps of this enclosure.

"At least," said Daphne, "if I am sad, I will go and shed my tears in my beloved stream."

"Will you find time to weep?" said Hector pressing her hand; "here all our days will be happy. Look at that window, half-hidden by the ivy and the virgin-vine; there you will inhale life every morning when you wake. Look down there at that green arbor: there we will talk every evening of our past and future happiness. Our life will be lovely and sweet as a ray of sunshine that passes over roses."

They had entered the cottage. It was anything but a palace; but beneath those worm-eaten rafters, within the shelter of those dilapidated walls, before that humble hearth, poverty gayly smiled upon you.

with its primitive simplicity, while offering you a stool. Daphne at first felt somewhat strange upon those bare flag-stones, as she inhaled the rustic odor of the hearth where the supper was cooking, of the pantry where the cheese was drying, and the safe where the brown bread was moulding ; out thanks to love which has the power of metamorphosis, which spreads over everything its magic rays, Daphne was pleased with the cottage, the furniture, and the rustic perfume.

The good old woman, on returning from the garden, was much surprised at the sight of Hector and Daphne.

“What a pretty sister you have there, Monsieur Hector !”

“Listen, Babet ; since your daughter’s marriage, the little chamber up-stairs is almost abandoned ; mademoiselle will pass some days in that chamber ; but you will say nothing about it—it is a mystery.”

“As you please, Monsieur Hector ; I shall be very glad to see my daughter’s chamber so well occupied. The bed is not a bad one, the bed-clothes are of linen, but they are well acquainted with the wash-tub and the hedge.”

“What would you have ?” replied Hector, “all the luxury is without, and it is Providence that defrays the expense of it.”

“You will sup with me, my handsome lady,” added the old woman ; “my dishes are pewter, but

my vegetables and fruit have a quality that comes from the blessing of Heaven."

Thereupon the good old Babet set the table, and served up the supper. Hector bid Daphne an affectionate farewell, kissed her hand twenty times, and departed, promising to return the next day at sunrise.

V.

DAPHNE slept poorly in her little chamber. She was restless, she thought of her mother, and she was terrified at her love. At daybreak she opened her window, and as she beheld the first light of dawn, the trees glistening with dew, as she listened to the morning-bird, who was trying his notes, and skipping from branch to branch, her hostess's cock who was noisily crowing over yesterday's conquests, she regained a little serenity in her heart; her youthful and adventurous love appeared to her with new attractions. The path of the sinner is at first sown with roses, which afterward wither beneath tears: Daphne was only at the beginning of the road.

As she gayly drove from her mind the evil dreams of the night, she suddenly caught sight of Hector in the hedge of vines and hawthorns.

"Yon are punctual," she cried to him, "you come with the sun."

"How beautiful you are this morning, Daphne!" said Hector with a glance of love and an enamored smile.

She looked at herself absently and seeing that she was only half-clad, she threw herself into the bed.

"What shall I do?" she said; "I can not always wear a silk skirt and a satin waist."

She dressed herself however, as the day before, trusting to destiny for the morrow. Hector brought the necessary materials for writing to Madame Deshoulières, and Daphne wrote an affectionate letter of farewell.

"That will do," said Hector; "I have a peasant here who will deliver it; and as for me, I will return this afternoon to the field of the château d'Urtis, as if nothing had happened: they will never suspect that I have seen you. Your mother sets out this evening, you say: to-morrow, then, we shall have nothing more to fear."

The lovers gayly breakfasted together in the little chamber. Daphne herself had prepared the honey, the fruits and the cheese, and she herself had been to the spring with the broken pitcher belonging to the cottage.

"You see, sir," said she, as she sat down to the table, "that I have all the accomplishments of a peasant."

"And all the grace of a duchess," said Hector.

At two o'clock he went toward the château d'Urtis, and as, after waiting awhile, he saw no one in the field, he approached the park, pushed the gate open and followed the main walk as far as the garden

steps. Madame Deshoulières perceived him, and hastened to meet him.

"My daughter, sir," she said in great agitation; "have you not seen my daughter?"

"I hoped to see her here," replied Hector with well-acted surprise.

"She is gone, sir, gone to some convent or other, gone like a crazy girl, disguised as a shepherdess. Wretched girl! what a night we have passed! what trouble! what anxiety! what tears! and I must depart thus without being able to follow her."

Hector still artlessly feigned surprise; he even feigned sorrow, he offered his services, and spoke of running after the fugitive; at last, in spite of all her accustomed penetration, Madame Deshoulières had not the least idea, that Hector knew where her daughter was. After having bowed to Madame d'Urtis and Amaranthe, he departed, flattering himself, that he was a youth who gave promise of success in the manœuvres of love.

He returned to Daphne, who had again become sad, and consoled her with the picture of a happy future. The next day he came rather later, he was more thoughtful than usual, and embraced his pretty shepherdess with some constraint.

"Do you know," she said to him, "that you are too gallant? A shepherd who is well taught and deeply in love, should awake his shepherdess every mornning with the sound of the bagpipes; he should

fill his scrip with bouquets and fruits, gathered in the early dew; he should carve her initials on the bark of the tree that ascends to her window, even as they are carried upon his heart. But you do nothing of all this; you are content to come like a bed-chamber gallant, when the clock strikes twelve, and you complain that the happy moment does not arrive for us. Look, it is I who have gathered flowers and fruits. Is not our little chamber beautiful now? Hyacinths at the window, roses on the mantelpiece, violets everywhere. Ah! if you were only here oftener!"

They descended to the garden, where the good old woman was breakfasting in company with her cat and her bees.

"Come in this direction," said Daphne; "do you see that little corner newly tilled? well, that is my garden. There is nothing much growing there yet, but what a charming bower of vines! what a beautiful and fragrant hedge! To-morrow there will be a bank of turf for us to sit upon. But what is the matter with you? you are so absent-minded, that you are not listening to me."

"Nothing is the matter with me Daphne, nothing in truth; I love you more and more, that is all."

"That is no reason why you should be so sad."

Hector soon departed without confiding to Daphne the cause of his uneasiness.

Now this was the state of affairs at the château de

Langevy. His cousin, Clotilde had arrived with a great aunt, to pass the whole spring there. M. de Langevy, who did not take a roundabout way to accomplish his projects, had already plainly signified to his son, that Mademoiselle Clotilde de Langevy, their niece and cousin, was a pretty girl, and what is more, a rich heiress; and that he, Hector de Langevy, the last of his name, and heir of a slender patrimony, must hasten, by all fair means, to marry the said cousin at his own proper risk and peril. Hector had at first nobly rebelled as he thought of poor Daphne; but gradually, as he took a closer view of the matter, he had discovered, with the aid of her fortune, many attractions in his cousin. She was pretty, graceful, lively; she hung carelessly upon his arm, she had the most charming prattle, in a word, were it not for the memory of Daphne, he would have fallen madly in love with her.

As it was necessary to take his cousin out walking if he did not wish to appear rude, he remained two days without going to the Chanmière-des-Vignes. The third day, Clotilde having begged him, in the presence of his father, to take her to the banks of the Lignon, he dared not refuse. He satisfied himself with sending a sigh after Daphne, to calm his suffering heart.

From the château de Langevy, the shortest road to the Lignon led directly toward the Chaumière-des-Vignes: Hector took good care not to take the

shortest road ; he made a *détour* of more than half a league, and led his cousin toward the end of Madame d'Urtis' field. While Clotilde was bending the reeds and stripping the falling branches of the willow, at the same time watching the flow of the celebrated stream, Hector occasionally cast a melancholy glance upon the deserted fields.

"Ah! good heavens!" suddenly exclaimed Clotilde, falling upon the bank.

Her foot had slipped, and she came near falling into the water. Hector ran toward her, threw himself affectionately at her feet and seized her hands. Soon, as she was quite pale and faint, he gently took her by the waist, and told her to lean her head upon his shoulder.

"Any one would say it was a naiad surprised by a fawn," he murmured as he kissed her hair.

As he raised his head, he saw poor Daphne upon the other bank, half-hidden by the branches of a willow. To pass away the time, she had come to visit again the cradle of her love, to tread once more the grass of that charming field, where two days ago—two days only—the hours had passed so sweetly by. Poor girl! what did she see? what did she hear? As a worthy reply to the kiss that Hector gave Clotilde, she broke her crook with a noble burst of anger, and then, overcome by her despair, she fell upon the bank, uttering a plaintive cry.

At that cry, at the sight of poor Daphne falling in

a swoon, Hector, quite beside himself, scarcely knowing where he was, darted blindly to the other side of the stream, transported by love and grief. He started and ran wildly toward his sweet shepherdess, quite forgetting Clotilde, who was still speaking to him. He raised Daphne in his trembling arms.

"Daphne! Daphne!" he cried to her, "return to yourself, it is you I love — you alone!"

He embraced her tenderly, he wept, he spoke to her again. Daphne opened her eyes sadly and shut them again, the same moment.

"No, no," she said, "it is no longer Daphnis, and I am no longer Daphne; it is all over, let me die alone."

"My dear love, my poor Daphne, I love you, I swear it to you from the bottom of my heart; I did not deceive you, you are the only one I love."

In the meantime, Clotilde had come directly opposite to this affecting picture.

"Well! cousin," she cried to Hector; "must I return all alone to the château?"

"Go, sir," said Daphne repelling him; "go, you are waited for, you are called."

"But Daphne.but cousin."

"I will listen to you no more, sir; my moments of folly are over; let us speak of it no more."

"Cousin," cried Clotilde from her side in a tone of raillery, "do you know that this affecting shepherdess scene, is a most agreeable surprise? I shall set

it down to your account. You did not promise me this upon the banks of the Lignon. Tell me, cousin, is it the last chapter of *Astrée*?"

"Cousin, I will join you in a moment, I will tell you all, and you will no longer laugh."

"For Heaven's sake, sir," said Daphne rising, "for Heaven's sake, let this sad story be for ever a mystery. I do not wish that the weakness of my heart should be laughed at. Farewell, sir, let all be forgotten, let all be buried."

Lovely tears flowed down Daphne's cheeks.

"No, no, Daphne, I will never leave you, I say it openly. I will take my cousin back to the château, and I will return in an hour to wipe away your tears, and ask your pardon on my knees. Besides, I am not guilty, I take my cousin to witness. Is it not a fact, Clotilde, that I did not love you?"

"Faith, cousin, you have told me that you loved me; but as men always say the opposite of what they think, I am willing to admit, that you did not love me. Do not give yourself any uneasiness on my account, I will return alone."

She departed much offended, but with the calmest and most careless expression possible.

"I will run after her," said Hector, "for she would tell my father all. Farewell, Daphne; in two hours I shall be at the Chaumière-des-Vignes more in love than ever."

"Farewell then," murmured Daphne in a faint

voice. "Farewell!" she added, as she saw Hector depart; "farewell! as for me, in two hours, I shall no longer be at the Chaumière-des-Vignes."

VI.

SHE returned to old Babet's cottage. When she saw again her little chamber, which she had taken so much trouble and so much pleasure in adorning with flowers and green branches, she bent her head in sorrow. "My poor roses," she murmured as she breathed the fragrance of the chamber, which was even now a fragrance of love, "I little thought, when I gathered you, that his heart would wither before you."

The good old woman came in. "What! my daughter, I see you in tears? Do persons weep at eighteen?"

Daphne threw herself sobbing into the arms of Babet. "He deceived me, he abandoned me for his cousin. I am going to depart; you will tell him that he has done me great wrong that I am wounded by a mortal blow No, no, do not tell him that. Tell him that I departed quite resigned, pardoning him, and praying to God for him. But I shall not have the strength to go without seeing him again!"

Daphne loved Hector with all her heart and all her soul; she had blindly abandoned herself to love,

with the earnest ardor of hopeful youth. Before quitting Paris, she had dreamed that during her travels, she would meet some evening in the country, in the neighborhood of a château, some young gentleman, who would love her passionately. This dream cherished at Paris, had been almost realized in Le Forez. Hector was indeed he whom her heart expected; even better, for the dream had been improved upon by her fancy of playing the shepherdess, and by all the unforeseen charms of a rising love. She had been delighted and enchanted; losing her heart, she had also lost her better reason; she had followed her lover instead of her mother.

Hector joined Clotilde, but during their walk, they did not dare to speak to each other of the scene in the field. Hector augured well from his cousin's silence; he hoped she would not say a word about his secret love at the château. Vain hope! As soon as she found an opportunity, the secret was spread abroad. In the evening, M. de Langevy, seeing her more thoughtful than usual, asked her if she had any cause of sorrow.

"Nothing is the matter with me," she said with a sigh.

The uncle insisted. "Clotilde, my dear girl, what ails you? Has the pilgrimage to the banks of the Lignon, wrought some evil miracle?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Has my son. But where is Hector?"

"He has returned on the pilgrimage."

"What the devil is he going to do down there?"

"He doubtless has his reasons."

"Truly! Come, niece, do you know anything about it?"

"Nothing whatever, uncle, only"

"Only? Come, tell me all."

"I tell you uncle, I know nothing, but I saw Monsieur Hector's shepherdess."

"His shepherdess! you are laughing at me, Clotilde. Do you believe in shepherdesses?"

"Yes, uncle, for I saw Monsieur Hector's shepherdess fall down in a swoon, on the bank of the stream."

"Zounds! a shepherdess! Hector smitten by a shepherdess!"

"But, uncle, it is a very pretty shepherdess in a silk skirt and a satin waist."

"So, so. But what is this story then? it must be amusing. Let some one bring me my game-bag and gun immediately. Do you believe, my good Clotilde, that that devil of a lad has returned to his shepherdess?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Has that shepherdess any sheep?"

"No, uncle."

"The devil! the devil! that is still more dangerous. Did you follow the osier path?"

"Yes, uncle, but I fancy that the happy shepherdess is nearer the village."

"Very well, I hope to see them presently."

M. de Langevy departed murmuring: "Silk skirts, satin waists! Ah! my son, I should like to know where you get the money, to dress your shepherdesses in that style."

The old baron went directly to the Chaumière-des-Vignes, hoping that Babet might give him some information in regard to Hector's prowess. He found the old woman in the doorway reposing from the fatigues of the day.

"Well, Babet, what news at your place?" said the old baron in a gentle voice.

"Nothing new," said the old woman, about to rise out of respect for her visitor.

"Sit still, sit still, Babet," said M. de Langevy, placing his hand with rustic familiarity on the old woman's shoulder. "Stay, here is a bundle of reeds and rushes for me to sit upon."

At that moment, M. de Langevy heard the little window up stairs shut. "I have guessed it," thought he. "That, perhaps, is the cage of my amorous pigeons. Tell me, Babet, have you seen my son this week?"

"I see him often, baron; he comes to hunt in my close."

"Ah ha! Does he appear to have good sport?"

"To-day, I received a magnificent hare from him,

which I did not very well know what to do with ; I at last put it on the spit. My poor kitchen was much astonished at seeing such a royal morsel."

"That hare was not for you alone, probably?"

"Who should eat it with me? you perhaps, baron? I should be very proud to entertain such a guest."

"Hark ye, Babet, let us speak frankly: I know all that is going on; my son is in love with a certain shepherdess, who can not be far from here."

"I do not know what you mean."

"You know so well, that you are quite confused. But calm yourself, there is no great harm in all that; it is a mere piece of childishness. But tell me something of this girl."

"Ah! baron," exclaimed poor Babet, who thought she ought no longer to dissemble, "she is an angel; you shall see—she is an angel."

"So, so; whence comes this angel, if you please? She has not descended from heaven, I fancy."

"I know nothing more, baron, but I pray to God every hour of the day, that you may have no other daughter."

"We shall see, we shall see. Our two lovers are up stairs, are they not?"

"Why should I conceal it from you? Yes, baron, they are up stairs, loving each other like true children of kind Heaven. You can go up, for theirs is a love that never shuts the door."

M. de Langevy entered the cottage, approached the stair-case, and ascended with a light step. He stopped half-way at the sight of the lovers gently leaning upon each other, the one weeping, the other consoling her. The old soldier was almost moved by the scene, but reason regained the upper hand.

"Wondrous well!" he said as he ascended the last steps.

Daphne uttered a cry of surprise and terror.

"There is no cause to weep," said M. de Langevy. "As for you, my son, you shall let me a little way into this mystery."

"I have nothing to say," murmured Hector bitterly.

Daphne, who had freed herself from his arms, had fallen fainting upon a chair.

"Father," added Hector darting toward Daphne, "you see that your place is not here."

"Nor yours either, sir," said the baron angrily. "What is the meaning of this silliness? You will return to the château at once, if you do not wish it to be closed to you for ever."

Hector made no reply, he was wholly occupied with Daphne.

"Once again, sir," said the exasperated baron, "consider what you are doing."

"I do consider," murmured Hector, raising the poor girl in his arms. "The château shall be closed to me for ever, if you wish it."

"Come, sir, none of your vamping; do you return with me, or do you remain here?"

"Listen, father; I will follow you on account of the respect I bear you, but I must tell you that I love Mademoiselle Deshoulières, with all the power of my heart; between her and me, it is an affair of life and death."

"Deshoulières, Deshoulières — I have heard that name before. I knew a M. Deshoulières during our campaigns in Flanders, a gallant man who had a handsome wife, but not a sou to his name. Do you return with me, sir?"

Repelled by Daphne, who begged him to depart, Hector followed his father in silence, hoping to soften him, and that he would soon be able to love Daphne, with full liberty of heart and mind. M. de Langevy bowed to the young lady, wished a good appetite to the old woman as he passed out of the cottage, and went upon his way, lecturing his son upon his extravagant inclinations. Hector made no reply, except to turn around at every step to cast a parting glance at the little window.

When Daphne saw Hector disappear amid the thick trees on the road-side, she sighed, shed a tear of farewell, and murmured: "I shall see him no more." She looked with a mournful eye upon the walls of that little chamber, now saddened by the darkness of evening, that had contained so many bright hopes. She plucked a rose at the window,

sadly inhaled its fragrance, then tore it in pieces with a savage pleasure, and cast its leaves to the wind. "Thus will I do with my love," said the poetical beauty, "I will cast it to the wind of death."

She placed the bare stalk in her bosom, and descended the stairs.

"Farewell," she said, as she embraced the old woman, "farewell. I return with resignation to the place I so madly left. If you see Hector again, tell him that I loved him well; but tell him to forget me, as I myself shall forget him."

As she pronounced these last words, the poor girl turned pale and trembled.

She departed, and took the road to the château d'Urtis. When she reached the field, her eyes rested upon the crook which she had broken in the morning; she picked it up and carried it away, as the only memento of Hector. The sun had set, and night was gradually coming on like a night of spring; Nature in all her luxury, was spreading abroad a perfume of happiness which was bitter to Daphne. She fell upon her knees, and prayed to God, while she pressed the crook to her heart.

VII.

SHE did not find her mother at the château, but Madame d'Urtis received her with great joy.

"Well, my lost white sheep, have you returned then to the fold?"

"Alas!" said the poor girl, "yes, I have returned, but more lost than ever; I departed with the wildest and gayest hopes, and I return all alone. Look, my crook is again broken, but this time Hector will not return to cut me another."

She confided all to Madame d'Urtis.

On his return to the château de Langevy, in the presence of his father and Clotilde, Hector remained faithful to his heart. He told all that had happened with the ardent enthusiasm of love; Clotilde herself was softened. She entreated M. de Langevy on behalf of Hector.

"Come, uncle, it is all of no use, passions are not destroyed by combating them, as my grandmother used to say."

"Passions pass as quickly as the wind, time sweeps out the heart with the end of his wing, as your grandmother also used to say. Before a week is over, Hector will have forgotten his shepherdess; such is my will."

"So much the wind bears away, uncle. The heart alone has a will, for the will of the heart comes from heaven."

"Come, Clotilde, I see you are as unreasonable as the rest."

"Ah! uncle, upon this subject, he who is the most unreasonable, is, I believe, the most reasonable."

"I tell you again, before a week is over, Hector will have changed the object of his adoration; you know it very well—you have not such pretty eyes in vain."

"Uncle, be assured, Hector will never love me, and besides, I am not at all desirous of succeeding another. As mademoiselle de Scudéry says, in love the happiest queens are those, who create kingdoms in unknown countries."

"You read romances, Clotilde; so much the worse. I will neither talk reason nor unreason with you any more about love."

Hector took his father upon his weak side.

"Consider, father, that if I married Mademoiselle Deshoulières, I should gloriously follow the career of arms. You have opened the road to me, and would I not be worthily guided by that brave M. Deshoulières, whom Louvois honors with his friendship?"

M. de Langevy ended by saying that he would reflect upon the matter, which was saying much in favor of the lover.

The next day at daybreak, Hector was at the Chaumière-des-Vignes.

"Well," said the old woman as she opened the door to him, "she has gone, the dear girl."

"Gone! and you let her go! But where shall I find her?"

He ran to the château d'Urtis. As he reached the door, he saw, with a sad presentiment, a carriage flying down the road. He rang the bell with an agitated hand. An old servant conducted him to Madame d'Urtis, who, contrary to her wont, appeared to him sad.

"Ah! it is you, monsieur de Langevy; you have doubtless come to see Mademoiselle Deshoulières. All is ended between you, you will see her no more in this world, for in an hour, she will no longer be of this world; she has set out with my maid for the convent of the Val-Chrétien."

"Gone!" exclaimed Hector, quite overcome.

"She has left me her farewell for you, in this letter."

Madame d'Urtis took a note from her basket.

"'If he comes here, give him this letter,' she said to me."

Hector took Daphne's note; he opened it with a pale countenance, and read these few lines:—

"Farewell then, it is no longer Daphne who writes you, it is a poor penitent girl, who is going to pray to God, for those who suffer. Fortune drives me from the world—I am resigned—I am going to bury myself alive. I do not complain, for I have had a bright dream in this world; one day of happiness has given me a glimpse of heaven. We began the

most delightful eclogue in the world ; we could not finish it, but bright dreams only end in heaven. Farewell."

"Madame," said Hector kissing the note, "have you a horse?"

"What do you wish to do?"

"I wish to join Mademoiselle Deshoulières."

"You may join her, but you can not turn her from her course."

"For Heaven's sake, madame, a horse ; take pity on my misfortune."

Madame d'Urtis, who had witnessed Daphne's sad resolution only with regret, ordered a horse to be saddled for Hector.

"Go," she said to him, "God guide you both!"

He started at a gallop, and overtook the carriage in less than half an hour.

"Daphne, you shall go no further," he said, as he held out his hand to her.

"You!" exclaimed Daphne with surprise, joy, and grief.

"Yes, I who love you as my true love, and as my wife ; my father has at length listened to reason."

"And I too, I have at length listened to reason, and you know where I am going. Leave me in the right road. You are rich, I am poor ; you love me to-day, but who knows if you would love me to-morrow? As I wrote to you, we have begun a bright dream, let us not spoil it by an unhappy end. Let

VOL. I.—18

that dream preserve all its freshness, all its fragrance of the month of May, all its vernal charm. Our crooks are broken, two of our sheep have already been killed, and since yesterday, they have been cutting down the willows in the field. You see plainly that our brightest sun has shone. She whom I saw yesterday, is to be your wife. (Ah! how you embraced her.) Marry her, then, and in your days of happiness, if you still walk upon the banks of the Lignon, my shade will perhaps appear to you, but then I shall smile upon you."

"Daphne, Daphne, I love you, I will quit you no more, I will live or die with you."

One evening, nearly half a century after, in a hôtel of the rue Saint-Dominique, where there was a gay supper, Gentil-Bernard, who always chronicled the news of the day, mentioned the death of an eccentric person, who had directed that an old broken stick should be placed in his coffin.

"It is M. de Langevy," said Fontenelle. "He married, to his great regret, the beautiful Clotilde de Langevy, who eloped so scandalously with a guardsman. As for M. de Langevy, he had been deeply in love with Bribri Deshoulières; that broken stick was a shepherd's crook, cut, during their amours, upon the banks of the Lignon. The last shepherd is dead, gentlemen, we must go to his funeral."

“And Bribri Dèshoulières, what became of her?” asked a lady.

“I have been told that she died very young in a convent in the south,” replied Fontenelle; “and it is very strange that when they came to bury her, they found a crook attached to her hair-cloth shirt.”

3. 11

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